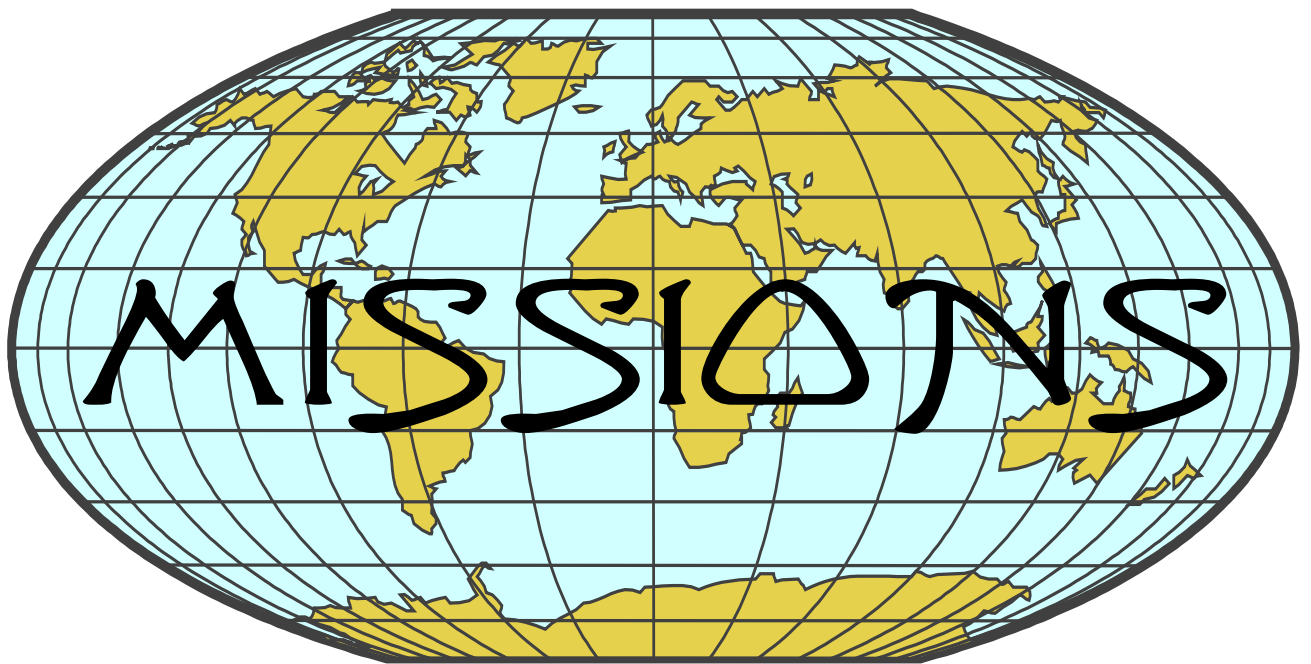


The CHURCH



and



A workbook
by Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1-5
The Great Commission	6-18
The Threefold Cord	19-21
Cooperation	22-24
The Missionary	25-34
Epilogue	35-36

INTRODUCTION

When we read the Bible we find a central theme, reconciliation to God. In the Old Testament we find the types of Christ in the sacrifices and in the New Testament the reality that those shadows pointed to, which is the final reconciliation to God through Christ, the perfect sacrifice. (Read the book of Hebrews for an explanation of this.)

This theme is best expressed in the Old Testament in Ezekiel.

Ez 34:16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up [that which was] broken, and will strengthen that which was sick...

And then in the New Testament we find:

Mt 18:11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

Lk 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

To apply this to our current study, the Bible and Missions, we will concentrate on the thought expressed in the word “seek” in Ezekiel and the words “come” and “seek” in Matthew and Luke.

These words denote an action on the part of God, in Christ, not an action on the part of the recipients of His Salvation. God came to us because we could not get to Him; nor did we want to. Thus, the idea of missions is inherent in these words.

Definitions: The word mission [from the Latin *missio (missionaris)* a sending] is defined by Webster as meaning:

1. *A group of people sent esp. abroad by a Church or other religious organizations to make conversions.*
2. *A body of representatives sent abroad for special diplomatic discussions etc.*
3. *An aim in life, arising from a conviction or sense of calling.*
4. *An assigned combat operation.*

The noun missionary is exclusively defined by Webster as meaning:

A person who undertakes the work of a religious mission.

It is obvious that the words “missions” and “missionary” denote a group or an individual that is **sent** to accomplish a specific purpose; whether religious, diplomatic, or military. And in the case of Christ it was all three. Diplomatic because Christ came to reconcile two differing enemy factions; religious because it concerned the reconciling of fallen man to a perfect and holy God; and military because He came and fought, and won, the deciding battle of the ongoing war that Satan has waged against God since before the creation of this universe.

In the Bible, God teaches about the active essence of missions when He used the words “seek, come,” and “save,” in **Lk 19:10**. In the Old Testament He was telling what He would one day do; and in the New Testament He told of what was being done in Christ in fulfillment of what had been promised in the Old.

Christ, the missionary-

At the center of this OT prophecy and its fulfillment in the NT stood Christ. He was not only the perfect sacrifice shown in shadows and types in the Old Testament but He was the epitome of the missionary. He came to us, we did not go to Him. He left His home, the glories of Heaven, to come to a foreign place, this cursed Universe, to save mankind who had willingly turned its back on God. We did not want Him, we rejected Him, and we consigned Him to die on Calvary. And all of this He suffered willingly, for us, expecting no reward in return.

This missionary endeavor was the most important reason for Christ's incarnation:

I Tim 1:15 This [is] a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

In this verse we see the two absolutely essential ingredients of missions:

1. The action of going: "... **Christ Jesus came...**"
2. The end in mind- Salvation of the lost: "... **to save sinners...**"

The diplomatic missionary-

Remember that the second definition of "mission" was "*A body of representatives sent abroad for special diplomatic discussions, etc.*" God brings that definition into the idea of biblical missions in the book of II Corinthians.

II Cor 5:20-21 Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech [you] by us: we pray [you] in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him [to be] sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

In this passage we see that we are diplomats. We are being used of God to do two things:

1. To beseech you to be reconciled to God. (:20)
2. To deliver the message of reconciliation. (:21)

In the previous two verses we see an amplification of our diplomatic commission and the message we are to deliver.

II Cor 5:18-19 And all things [are] of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

As diplomatic ambassadors God has committed to us the ministry of reconciliation of man to God and the clear message that this reconciliation was accomplished **in Christ**.

The means of accomplishing the reconciliation-

Remember that the second essential ingredient of missions is, "The end in mind," which is "the Salvation of the lost." That is how the "reconciliation of man to God," our diplomatic commission, is accomplished; but, what means do we use to accomplish this "Salvation of the lost?"

We find the answer to that question in the book of Romans.

Ro 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

From this verse it is obvious that the missionary, the diplomatic ambassador, delivers his

message that reconciliation to God is accomplished in Christ by the means of giving the “**gospel of Christ,**” to those that he goes to as God’s messenger.

OK, it is by means of the Gospel that we carry out our assigned task. So now it is necessary that we define, exactly, what the “**gospel**” is. We find that answer over in **I Corinthians 15:1-4.**

- :1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;**
- :2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.**
- :3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;**
- :4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scripture:**

In this passage we first must take note of 2 things:

- 1. This is the same saving gospel delivered by Paul to the Romans. **(:1-2 cf Ro 1:16)**
- 2. And we also note that it is in total agreement with the OT scriptures. **(I Cor 15:3-4)**

Now that we know this is THE gospel, we can analyze it and divide it into three parts:

- 1. The first part of the gospel is that Christ died for us. **(:3)**
- 2. The second part is that He was buried. **(:4)**
- 3. The third part of the gospel is that He rose again the third day. **(:4)**

As is easily seen here, the gospel consists of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. These three parts comprise the whole gospel. There is no mention here of belonging to a particular church or religious group. Neither is there any mention of baptism, communion, penance, tithing, tongues, or any kind of good works. The gospel is exclusive according to **Romans 1:16**; and it is comprised of ONLY the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, according to **I Corinthians 15:1-4.**

NOTE: These two interrelated teachings about the gospel: its exclusiveness and its simple composition of only the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, will be the vortexes of more attacks from the devil and his children, the lost, than any other basic point of doctrine in the Bible. In addition, these two points concerning the gospel will be the center of more attacks from other supposedly Christian groups than any other. There are some particular sins, homosexuality, abortion, etc., that are predominant today or that will be predominant in the future that will be at the forefront of many of the battles that you will fight; but, as far as basic doctrine, the fight over what the gospel is and what it consists of will always be a point of extreme contention; even among many supposedly “Christian” denominations.

Almost every “Christian” church, other than the Baptists, teach that the gospel includes something more than its three basic parts, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. And every non-Christian religion either teaches that there is more than one way to God or that there is some other way to God than by Christ alone; i.e., they don’t teach “the gospel,” at all. Therefore, whether from “Christians” or non-Christians, you will face more battles over the gospel, both over its exclusivity and its simplicity, than over any other basic doctrinal issue.

Who, How, and What-

Now that we know that we are missionary ambassadors for Christ, the epitome of the missionary, and we know what the message is, the gospel of Christ, now we need to categorize the HOW, the WHO, and the WHAT of missions.

It is obvious that every Christian is a missionary (a giver of the gospel) either at home or away from home. So that answers the question of who. Now we need to find out what structure God approved as the framework in which the Christian is to operate while carrying out the job of missionary and how that structure is to go about carrying out its cooperative part in this missionary endeavor.

To learn what the structural framework is, go to **Acts 1:8**.

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

According to the context of this chapter it was the apostles, Christ’s original Baptist Church there at Jerusalem, to which he gave this order to be witnesses.

Now go to **Mt 28:16-20**

Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

Again it is the original Church which Christ started (the eleven disciples, V:16) that is being spoken to here and who are commanded to carry out God’s missionary plan for the world.

There are many other scriptures that corroborate what is taught in these two passages (we will get to them in the next section,) but the point is that the command to evangelize, baptize, and grow to maturity, is the commission that was given to the Local Church. Therefore, since evangelizing is the first part of the Local Church’s commission, it is obvious that it must be the framework within which the Christian is to carry out his responsibilities as a diplomatic missionary from God. This answers the final question of “What” the framework is within which God expects the Christians to operate to carry out their missionary endeavors. And since a church is a cooperative endeavor, this also answers the question of “How.”

Conclusion-

Now we have the answers to the “Who, How, and What,” of Missions.

1. “The Who,” is you.
2. “The How,” is within a framework of cooperation with other Christians.
3. “The What,” of that framework is the Local Church.

The Great Commission-

In the next segment we will give special attention to what is commonly called, “The Great Commission,” of **Mt 28:18-20**. It is the basis for all of the missionary endeavors of the members of the Local Church, the framework within which the Christian is to carry out all of his missionary endeavors, and gives us the exact sequence to be followed.

In that segment we will review and expand on some of the material that we have already briefly studied in this introduction and touch upon what is commonly called, “Faith Promise Missions,” as well.

NOTE: The upcoming segment was originally written for Faith Promise Missions Month at the church that I pastor in Ogden, UT. Some of the phrasing must be understood in that context. The use of such terms as “our church,” etc., were written to members of Ogden Bible Baptist Church and could be misconstrued as suggesting a “Universal Church” concept if misunderstood to include you who are not members. The concepts taught are applicable to all Christian members of Local Independent Baptist Churches and, in fact, are applicable to all Christians as a means of encouraging them to be obedient to God and become members of Independent Baptist Churches. However, the language used was directed toward members of OBBC. I am not and never will be a proponent of the “Universal Church,” concept as it has been historically taught and is taught today in both Catholic and Protestant Churches since it is contrary to scripture. However, the subject of the “Universal Church,” will be addressed in a later segment.

This note is to assure you that the language that will be used should never be taken by the readers to suggest that we are all included in some kind of earthly, “Universal Church.”

Now on to the Great Commission.

THE
GREAT COMMISSION
(Mt 28:18-20)

PART ONE
THE GREAT COMMISSION

Introduction: Any study of missions must start with the Great Commission given to the local Church. In addition to the command to evangelize, which is the first part of the Commission, we will also go on to study the Commission in its entirety. This is necessary in order to fully understand the missionary aspect of it and how it relates to the Commission as a whole.

Mt 28:18-20

- :18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**
- :19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**
- :20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.**

The Great Commission is in three parts:

- 1. Go and teach. (Win them to Christ.)**
- 2. Baptize.**
- 3. Teach. (Teach them to do what Christ commanded them to do.)**

I heard an old preacher summarize the Great Commission this way:

“Go and win ‘em; baptize ‘em; and grow ‘em.”

There are several other passages of Scripture that we will examine which help to explain the Great Commission. They are: **Mk 16:14-15; Lk 24:47-49; Jn 20:21-22; Acts 1:8 & ch. 2;** and various scriptures in **I & II Corinthians**. We will also briefly refer to other verses and passages.

I. Go and win 'em.

Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...

A. The first thing we notice is that we must GO TO THEM!

1. Mt 28:19 "Go ye..." Also, **Mk 16:15 "... Go ye..."**

2. To whom is the Lord speaking?

His Church.

Mt 28-16-20 the "... eleven disciples.."

Mk 16:14 "... the eleven..."

Acts 1:2 "... the apostles..." cf. **:8 "... ye shall be witnesses..."**

3. It is obvious that the Commission was given to the leaders of the Church that Jesus started during His earthly ministry; and they in turn were to lead the rest of that Church into obedience to the Great Commission. Then the new local Churches, that were later started by that first Church, inherited the Commission from the hands of those Apostles.

NOTE: We must remember that every Christian is expected to win souls to the Lord Jesus Christ; whether that Christian is a member of a local, New Testament, Baptist Church or not. However, the Commission to evangelize the world was given to the Local, New Testament Church, which every Christian is commanded to be a part of. (**Acts 1:1-2:1; 2:41-47; Heb 10:25; et al**)

Remember, Christ went to John the Baptist to be baptized. Therefore, that first Church was a de-facto Baptist Church because that is how you become a Baptist (or, as it was in the case of Christ, signify the proper and acceptable baptism)- you go to a Baptist to be baptized. The Bible does not call that first church a Baptist church because it was not necessary to do so since there was only ONE true church in the whole world at that time. Since then we have had an explosion of various kinds of churches holding to various doctrines contrary to the Word of God. Therefore, we call ourselves Baptists in order to let the world know that we are directly descended from the original Church that Jesus started; and that we practice the same baptism that Jesus signified as proper, which was handed down from that original Church to the present by direct succession. Also, we call ourselves Baptists in order to signify our adherence to the doctrines of that first Church as given to us in the Word of God; and our acceptance of only the Word of God as our final authority rather than some denominational hierarchy.

Therefore, by succession, the Great Commission to win, baptize, and raise to maturity those thus joined to our Church, is the direct responsibility of this and every Independent, New Testament, Baptist Church.

B. What do we do when we get to them? Teach them.

1. Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations...

2. What we are to teach them is explained in:

Mk 16:14-15.

:14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven...

:15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world,
and **PREACH THE GOSPEL** to every creature.

Acts 1:8

8: But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost
is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses...

I Cor 2:2 For I determined not to know any thing among you,
save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

3. And the Gospel that **Mk 16:15** says we are to deliver unto them is explained for us in

I Cor 15:1-4

:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto
you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;

:2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you,
unless ye have believed in vain.

:3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that
Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

:4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to
the scriptures:

NOTE: To understand the reason why it would do no good to take anything other than
the Gospel to the lost, see: **I Cor ch. 2; II Cor 5:19-21.**

4. **SUMMARY:** It is obvious that we, as a church, are commissioned to go to the lost and
win them to the Lord Jesus Christ with the Gospel.

- C. Then we are to Baptize them, scripturally.

Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the
name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

1. What is the proper mode of Baptism?

“baptizing” is from the Gk word βαπτίζοντες, *bap-tid-zon-tays*, which is from
βαπτίζω, *bap-tid-zo*, which means *to immerse*.

2. What is the proper authority to baptize?

Mt 28:19 “Go ye...” by context (see **I. A. 2.** above) the Church; specifically the Local,
Independent, New Testament, Baptist Church.

(See **NOTE**, under **I. A. 2.** above.)

3. What is the proper time to baptize?

After salvation.

Lk 3:3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching
the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you
in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;...

- a. Repentance. The word “for,” in these passages, carries the meaning of “because of,” and NOT the meaning of, “in order to accomplish.”

Example: If you saw a Wanted Poster stating that Jesse James is wanted for train robbery, would you think it meant that someone wanted Jesse to carry out a new robbery for them or would you think it meant that he was wanted because of a robbery that he already had committed? It is obvious that the meaning of the word “for” on the poster is “because of,” and not “in order to accomplish.”

The same meaning is carried in **Lk 3:3** and **Acts 2:38**. Baptism is something done after repentance (because of it), not in order to accomplish it. Therefore, the first requirement for Baptism entails repentance.

- b. Salvation,

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized:...

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:12 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip...

Read Acts 8:36-38

If you have a “New Bible,” then **Acts 8:37** probably is NOT in it. The necessity for salvation before baptism is NOT held to by some religions; and, obviously, can not be held to by those that promote the new “bibles” that teach this heresy by leaving out this key verse. (Catholics are the most famous for teaching salvation BY baptism.)

God’s true, preserved, Bible (the KJV) indisputably teaches that repentance unto salvation (... if thou believest... thou mayest...) is a prerequisite for baptism!

II Cor 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of...

Acts 18:8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

- c. It is obvious that the proper time for baptism is following Salvation.



4. What is the proper result of baptism?

Addition to the local Church and the attendant responsibility for the Great Commission which was given to the local Church.

Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added [unto them] about three thousand souls.

D. Then we are to teach them to do the things Christ commanded.

Mt 28::20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

“observe,” Gk τηρειν, *tey-ray'-in*, to observe practically, to keep strictly; i.e., to do.

1. Teach them to obey the commandments relating to the soul, the inner commandments.
2. Teach them to obey the commandments relating to the body, the outer commandments.
3. For the purposes of our study, (Missions) we will concentrate on teaching them to obey the last commandment Christ gave to His Church before His ascension.

Mt 28:19 Go ye therefore...

Mk 16:15 ... Go ye into all the world...

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be WITNESSES unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

4. And to accept the personal responsibility handed down from generation to generation.

Paul, the greatest missionary in the Bible outside of our Lord Jesus Christ, made sure that we understood that God has passed the responsibility for personal soul-winning and involvement in the Great Commission down to each individual member of the local Church today.

II Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

The obvious connotation here is that those “others,” who were taught by “faithful men,” are to continue the cycle. Therefore, it is a revolving commission of teaching that was to continue indefinitely. And of all of the teachings of Paul, the evangelist (soul-winner and church planter,) the greatest was his teachings and practice of carrying out the Great Commission by winning people to the Lord Jesus Christ and planting Churches so that those won could be baptized and have a place to grow and learn to carry out, themselves, the commandments of our Lord; i.e., to perpetuate the Great Commission personally.

PART TWO CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION

I. The Missionary Goes To the Lost.

A. The saved are commanded to go to the lost and compel them to come in.

Lk 14:23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel [them] to come in, that my house may be filled.

1. We are to go to them. **Mt 28:19 & Mk 16:15** “Go ye...”
2. We are to go everywhere.

Acts 1:8 ... unto the uttermost part of the earth.

3. And no member is exempt.

The Great Commission was given to the local Church; and if you are a member of a local church then you are to be taught by that church to obey the Great Commission.

B. How can you go to the uttermost part of the earth?

There are only two alternatives.

1. You can go as a missionary.
2. You can send a missionary.

II. The Missionary’s Job. (Mt 28:19-20)

The missionary’s job is given in the Great Commission.

- A. Win ‘em.
- B. Baptize ‘em.
- C. Grow ‘em.

III. The Missionary’s Authority and Power. (Acts 13:1-4)

- A. They are sent out from a local church. (:1-2)
- B. In agreement with, and in the power of, the Holy Ghost. (:3-4)
- C. So the biblical authority is the authority of the Local Church; therefore, the missionary carries that Church’s authority. That authority was given in the Great Commission to the Local Church; and the missionary out of that Local Church carries that authority with him.

IV. The Missionary’s Area of Ministry. (Acts 1:8)

Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- A. Locally. (“Jerusalem...”)
- B. Surrounding area. (“Judea...”)
- C. Adjoining areas. (“Samaria...”)
- D. Farthest reaches of the earth. (“... the uttermost part of the earth.”)

V. The Missionary's Call.

Since the command to “win‘em, baptize‘em, and grow‘em,” was given to the Local Church, which is comprised of all of the called out, baptized, believers, then every member is called as a missionary.

VII. The Division of Duty for the Local Church Missionaries. (Acts 1:8)

We divide the duties into two divisions:

Home Missions**Foreign Missions****A. Home missions.**

Two areas fall into this category.

1. **“Jerusalem...”** Our city.
2. **“Judea...”** Our country.

B. Foreign missions.

1. **“Samaria...”** Adjoining countries.
2. **“... the uttermost part of the earth.”** The rest of the of the world.

VIII. The Logistics of Duty for the Local Church Missionaries.**A. Missionaries to our city. (“Jerusalem...”)**

1. Can be served by our people in our Church. Need no monetary support.
2. We must start churches locally if the city gets to big. May need temporary support.

B. Our country. (“Judea...”) Can be served by missionaries sent out from our Church but they will need temporary monetary support.**C. Adjoining countries. (“Samaria...”)** Can be served by our Local Church; but, they must have complete, permanent, financial support to live in a foreign country; and, they must learn the customs of the country they are going to.**D. The rest of the world. (“... the uttermost part of the earth.”)**

Can be served by missionaries from our Local Church; but again, they must have complete, permanent, financial support to live in a foreign country; and, they must learn the customs of the country they are going to.

E. Summary. Money then is the common denominator. The home missionaries may need only temporary support; but the foreign missionaries need permanent support.

PART THREE

FINANCING

THE GREAT COMMISSION

I. Money Is Ministry.

A. Money is not evil; but the love of it is.

I Tim 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil...

B. Giving is taught in the Bible.

1. Tithes. (**Mal 3:10**) That is to take care of the local ministries and the preacher.

2. Offerings. (**I Cor 16:1-3**) That is to help take care of other ministries such as helping other Churches.

C. And every member is told to take part in both.

**Mal 3:8 Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say,
Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings.**

D. Even Christ kept a treasury to take care of the needs of His church. (**Jn 12:4-6**)

Jn 13:29 For some [of them] thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy [those things] that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

II. God Promises To Meet Your Need.

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

A. The context of that promise is: When you support the missionary. (**Phil 4:15-19**)

B. The result of your giving is:

1. The fruit (meaning the souls won, baptized, and taught to grow) is put on your account in heaven.

2. Your needs will be met because you met the needs of others.

a) This is the scriptural precept (law if you will) of sowing and reaping.

II Cor 9:6 But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

b) It specifically includes the area of giving.

c) It is pleasing to God; assuming your heart is right.

II Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

3. God will make sure you have the money to give to those endeavors that are pleasing to Him.

II Cor 9:8 And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work:

4. And the context in this passage was giving to meet the needs of the missionary. In this instance it was Paul, the missionary, who's needs were being discussed.



MONEY IS MINISTRY

II Cor 9:8

**And God [is] able to make all
grace abound toward you; that ye,
always having all sufficiency in all [things],
may abound to every good work:**

**PART FOUR
DIVISION OF LABOR FOR
THE GREAT COMMISSION**

I. Some Go Out As Missionaries On Behalf of the Local Church.

- A. They are sent out by the Local Church.
- B. And God's plan for financing the missionaries that carry out the Great Commission given to the Local Church, on their behalf, is the offerings of the members of the Local Church.

II. Some Stay and Finance Those that Go.

We give so they can go.

III. The Results.

- A. Every member is involved and obedient to the Great Commission.
- B. The Great Commission is carried out in obedience to Christ's command.
- C. Everybody wins.
 - 1. The fruit abounds to our account whether we go or send.
 - 2. God meets both the needs of the goer and the needs of the sender.
 - 3. Christ will be with both of us.

(The following verse is in the context of carrying out the Great Commission.)

Mt 28:20 ... lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

IV. The Mandate.

- A. God cannot bless us as a Church unless we are carrying out both parts- the going and the sending both at home and abroad.
- B. God cannot give us those special blessing as individuals unless we are involved in some part of the Great Commission- both the going and the sending.

PART FIVE

FAITH PROMISE AND
THE GREAT COMMISSION

Introduction: This segment is included in order to show you the reasons for and how to go about Faith Promise giving to finance Missions.

I. God Is Able To Supply All Your Needs.

Phil 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need
according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

II. God Blesses You When You Give.

The context of God supplying all your need is that He does so when you give.

A. The Philippians had supplied the need of God's missionary, Paul, and in return God said He would take care of all of their needs. **(Phil 4:14-19)**

B. God's law of sowing and reaping says that you receive what you sow.

1. Gal 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for
whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.

II Cor 9:6 But this [I say], He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly;
and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

2. According to the context of **Phil ch. 4 & II Cor ch. 9**, this is true in giving to the needs of others including missionaries.

C. Some give out of their prosperity.

I Cor 16:2 Upon the first [day] of the week let every one of you lay by him in
store, as [God] hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.

D. Some give out of sacrifice.

1. The widow gave two mites which was all her living. **(Mk 12:42-44)**

2. Some give out of DEEP POVERTY! **(II Cor 8:1-4)**

III. Faith Promise.

A. We have already seen that God has promised to bless you if you bless others.

B. We have also seen that He promises to pour out a blessing because of your tithes and offerings. **(Malachi 3:8-12)**

C. We also have seen that He commands us to go; and that some go locally and some go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

D. We have also seen that we are all responsible to go locally and send to other places.

E. So how does Faith Promise work?

1. We pray and ask God how much He is going to give us to give to missions each week.

2. We then purpose in our hearts to give that much each week, trusting God to supply it.

3. We do so cheerfully, by faith, believing in God's ability to keep His promise to supply all our need.

II Cor 9:7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, [so let him give]; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.

4. The more we give the more He gives us through others; and the stingier we are the stingier those others will be with us.

Lk 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.

5. If we give what God lays on our hearts then we can claim two promises of God.

a. He WILL give us the money to abound in this good work of missions.

II Cor 9:8 And God [is] able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all [things], may abound to every good work:

b. He will bless us as a church for being obedient to the Great Commission.

6. His presence will be with us and He will give to us the ability, as individuals and ALL POWER as His Church, to carry out His Great Commission. **(Mt 28:18-20)**

F. Faith Promise cards.

(This segment is included to give you an example of how to carry out the Faith Promise Missions commitment.)

1. You pray this week about how much God wants you to give each week to Missions.
2. We will hand out the Faith Promise cards next Wednesday night before the Missionary.
3. After he is done, then you will BY FAITH put an amount on the cards that you PROMISE God that you are going to give EVERY WEEK and trust him to give back to you.
4. Then we will take up the cards and find out how much our mission budget will be next year.
5. There will be cards for adults and cards for children. Parents, help the children to fill out their cards.
6. Remember, you are PROMISING GOD that you will give that amount EVERY WEEK and BY FAITH trust God to supply your need to abound to this good work AS HE PROMISED HE WOULD IN HIS WORD!

GOD BLESS YOU!

and

**PRAY THIS WEEK ABOUT HOW MUCH GOD
WOULD HAVE YOU GIVE TO MISSIONS BY FAITH!**

Faith Promise Missions

I have prayed and asked God what He is going to give me extra above my regular tithes and offerings to give to missions each month. I am going to start giving that amount, by faith, starting next Sunday.

ADULT

Amount: \$ _____ Date _____

If you made a promise to God to give a certain amount, then that is between God and yourself. We only need to know how much in order to figure out our missions budget. Please tear off this part and turn it in Sunday night.

Amount: \$ _____

ADULT Do not sign this portion!

Faith Promise Missions

I have prayed and asked God what He is going to give me extra above my regular tithes and offerings to give to missions each month. I am going to start giving that amount, by faith, starting next Sunday.

ADULT

Amount: \$ _____ Date _____

If you made a promise to God to give a certain amount, then that is between God and yourself. We only need to know how much in order to figure out our missions budget. Please tear off this part and turn it in Sunday night.

Amount: \$ _____

ADULT Do not sign this portion!

Faith Promise Missions

I have prayed and asked God what He is going to give me extra above my regular tithes and offerings to give to missions each month. I am going to start giving that amount, by faith, starting next Sunday.

CHILD

Parents: Help your child with this card.

Amount: \$ _____ Date _____

If you made a promise to God to give a certain amount, then that is between God and yourself. We only need to know how much in order to figure out our missions budget. Please tear off this part and turn it in Sunday night.

Amount: \$ _____

CHILD - Do not sign this portion!

THE THREEFOLD CORD

It is obvious from our study of the Great Commission that Missions involves more than just winning the lost. It also includes Baptizing them after their Salvation and then teaching them to observe (keep close and do) all of the things that Christ commanded them. Included in the latter is personally perpetuating the cycle of Salvation, baptism, and growth of the new converts made thereby.

If we ever lose sight of the threefold cord of the Great Commission then we will fall into disobedience to Christ's command. In addition, if even one of the cords is broken then the whole Commission is weakened and becomes susceptible to failure. With one cord broken a rope will begin to unravel and eventually it will be overcome by the forces against it. This is equally true of the Great Commission. If we neglect any part of it then the whole will fail. Misunderstanding of both the Commission itself and the vehicle authorized and commanded to carry it out, the Local Church, are two of the major reasons that so many Churches fail. If they have an improper understanding of the Local Church concept then they will carry out only a portion or portions of the Commission and depend upon other parts of the "Universal Church" to carry out the parts they may neglect. This results in their being disobedient to Christ and His threefold Commission which He expects them to personally carry out as a Local Church. And if they misunderstand the Great Commission itself and its threefold makeup, then they may carry out one portion of the Commission, such as winning the lost, and leave the other two undone. Or they may carry out two parts, winning and baptizing, and leave out the third. However, a Church that carries out all three parts, "win'em, baptize'em, and grow'em," has the maximum strength of the threefold cord as well as the maximum realization of Christ's presence, blessing, and power because of their total obedience to His command.

Ecc 4:12 ... a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Mt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen

Pastors may come and go; but the Church remains. Members may come and go; but the Church remains. The pastor who starts a particular church with the proper authority and the original members there may be strong on soul-winning and collect a good nucleus of people. But those original ones may, and most probably will, leave; but the Church remains. That is why the Commission was given to the Church collectively and not to the pastor and/or the members individually and independently of one another. If the original ones are not faithful to keep all three parts of the Commission, then God will replace them with ones who will carry on, or He will put them on the shelf and use the new ones that come into the Church. If the pastor is not faithful to all parts of the Commission, then God will replace him with one that will lead the Church toward further compliance; or, as a last resort, He will write Ichabod over the door and shut it down as a true Church. Therefore, let us never lose sight of the Commission in its entirety!

The propagation of the gospel depends on the propagation of the Church (in the sense of a mother giving birth to new entities) which itself depends on the propagation of the gospel. This is the circular plan of God for the continuation of the gospel until Christ's return, to the saving of souls in this world. Without the Independent Churches down through the years propagating the gospel through its members, who are properly trained by them in what the gospel really is, the admixture of error would soon sidetrack the gospel into another gospel, which is not another, exactly as the Bible warned us about in Galatians and Second Corinthians.

Gal 1:6-9 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any [man] preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.

II Cor 11:3-4 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or [if] ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with [him].

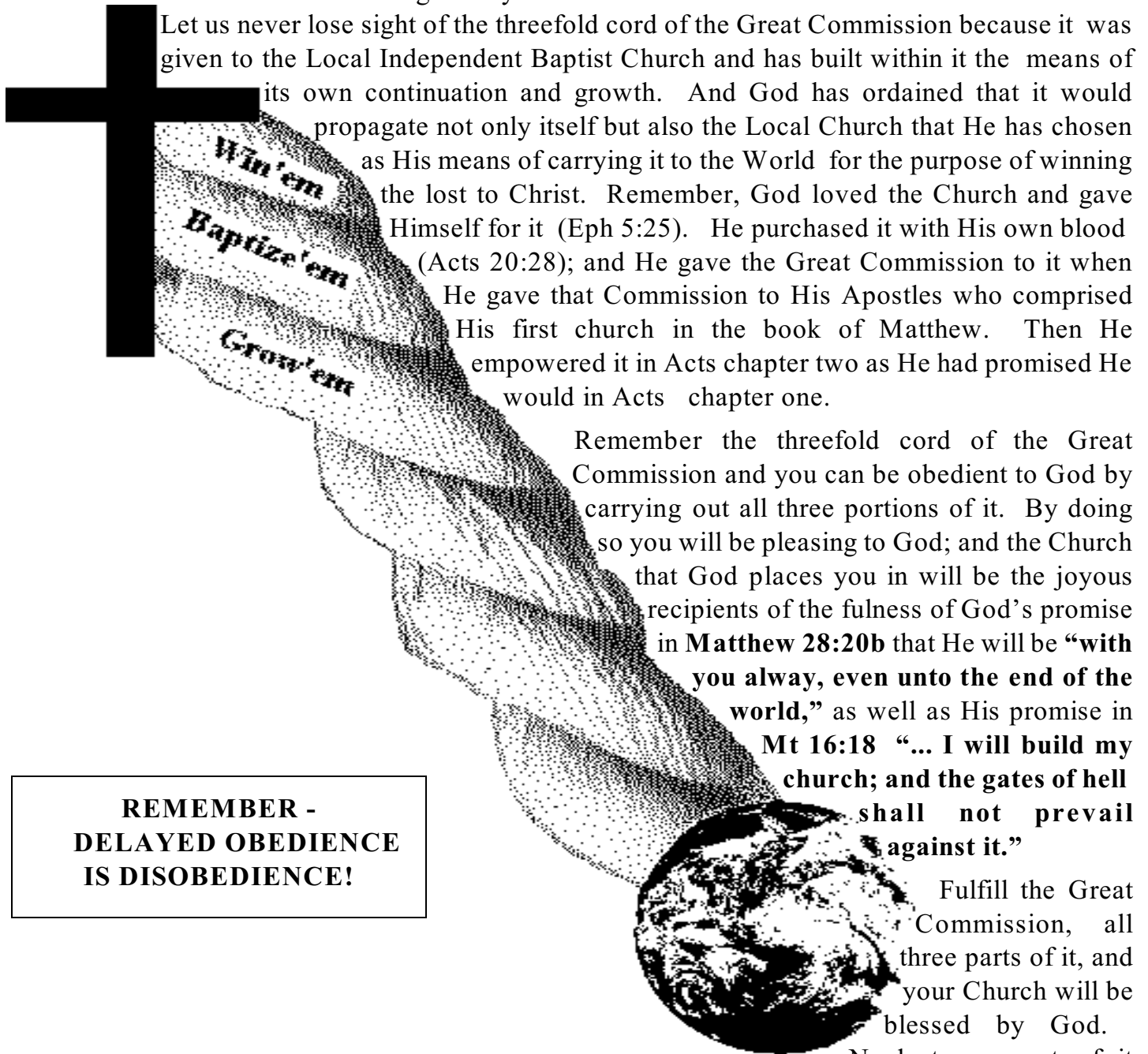
If you depend on untrained, Lone Ranger Christians alone to propagate the gospel, then the chance is great that Satan can get to them and corrupt them into propagating a false gospel. Which is exactly what we have seen over the last two millennia because of misunderstandings in both the concept of the Church and the threefold cord of the Great Commission.

II Cor 11:13-15 For such [are] false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore [it is] no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

Also, Christ has given the authority to pass on Baptist baptism to the Local Church; which also leaves out Lone Ranger Christians for the spreading of proper baptism.

Individual Christians are to win souls, true, but the Great Commission is more than just winning souls; therefore, it was given to the Local church. And that Local Church is responsible, collectively, through the efforts of its individual members, to carry it out. Individual members may carry out individual parts of the Commission, but the Church collectively carries out all of the parts of it.

Therefore, God has given the Local Independent Church the Commission to not only win them and baptize them, but to also train them in how to propagate the true gospel and in the other commandments given by our Lord Jesus Christ.



Let us never lose sight of the threefold cord of the Great Commission because it was given to the Local Independent Baptist Church and has built within it the means of its own continuation and growth. And God has ordained that it would propagate not only itself but also the Local Church that He has chosen as His means of carrying it to the World for the purpose of winning the lost to Christ. Remember, God loved the Church and gave Himself for it (Eph 5:25). He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28); and He gave the Great Commission to it when He gave that Commission to His Apostles who comprised His first church in the book of Matthew. Then He empowered it in Acts chapter two as He had promised He would in Acts chapter one.

Remember the threefold cord of the Great Commission and you can be obedient to God by carrying out all three portions of it. By doing so you will be pleasing to God; and the Church that God places you in will be the joyous recipients of the fulness of God's promise in **Matthew 28:20b** that He will be **“with you always, even unto the end of the world,”** as well as His promise in **Mt 16:18** **“... I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”**

Fulfill the Great Commission, all three parts of it, and your Church will be blessed by God.

Neglect any part of it

and God cannot give you the fulness of His blessing because of your disobedience.

**REMEMBER -
DELAYED OBEDIENCE
IS DISOBEDIENCE!**

COOPERATION

One of the problems we have in Independent Baptist Churches today is a misunderstanding in the area of cooperation and the autonomy of the Local Church. I even had one man tell me that cooperation between churches in starting churches was unscriptural. Therefore, we will address that issue in addition to other areas of misunderstanding.

The Local Church

Yes, Christ set up His Church as an Independent, Local and Baptist, Church, answerable to no one except Himself. (Mt 3:13; Mk 1:9; Lk 3:21; Eph 1:22; 5:23-24; Col 1:17-18; et al)

There are 114 instances of the word “church” in the New Testament; and all of them except a very few refer to a Local Church. The few exceptions are when the word is used in a symbolic or a generic sense, such as Acts 7:38, where Israel in the wilderness is symbolically referred to as “the church,” and several other places where the word is used in a generic sense.

Paul spoke of “the whole church” coming together in I Cor 14:23, when he was obviously talking of only those there in Corinth. If the church was not a local body of believers then we would have to believe that he was talking about every Christian in the world and of all ages coming together there at Corinth at one time. We know that to think such a thing would be a ridiculous mutilation of the context of that verse. Therefore, the “Universal Church” concept started by the Catholic Church (“Catholic” means Universal) and later adopted by most mainline Protestant denominations, is an untenable concept of Christ’s Church. This is also born out by the fact that we find 36 instances in the Bible where the word is used in the plural (“churches.”) Also, the overwhelming majority usage of the word is in referring to a particular church in a particular local. It would be impossible to reconcile the instances of plural usage and the overwhelming usage of the word church when speaking of a group of united believers in a specific place with the concept of an earthly “Universal” Church.

The closest teaching in the Scriptures to the Universal Church concept is the mention of the “... **general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven.**” (Heb 12:23) This does not mean anything like the “Universal Church” concept being taught by Catholics and many Protestants today. It is not an earthly “Universal Church,” but a heavenly one. Here on earth it can never assemble in obedience to Christ nor gather for the Lord’s Supper. Nor can it do any of the other things that Christ commanded His Church to do, including storehouse tithing and matters of discipline and exhortation. Therefore, the Universal Church exists only in Heaven and is always manifested LOCALLY here on earth. And the commands, including missions, given to His Church here on earth are ALWAYS given to the local, autonomous, Independent Churches!

The Independent Baptist Church

Therefore, the Church that Jesus started was an autonomous, Local Church; and the churches that propagated from it were also autonomous, Local Churches. Today, the original Church at Jerusalem and the other Churches propagated from it would be called Independent Baptist Churches. (We will address that again briefly in just a moment.) Also it is obvious that those local churches exercised obedience only to their head, Jesus Christ, and not to some all encompassing ecclesiastical and/or hierarchical body headed by a Pope, Priest, Prophet, or Preacher, who told the lesser clergy what to do. Also we have seen that because of His approval of, by His acquiescence to, baptism by John the Baptist, (which was shared by His entire original Church comprised of the Apostles, either directly or indirectly, and which was passed on to every other member) the Church He started would be called an Independent Baptist Church today.

Cooperation between the New Testament Baptist Churches

The Local Church is autonomous, true, but a spirit of willing cooperation existed and operated in the early churches according to the direct commandment of God.

Financial cooperation-

We see this most plainly in the exhortations of God given to the local churches by the hand of the Apostle Paul and the hand of Luke concerning financial help sent to other churches.

I Cor 16:1-3 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first [day] of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as [God] hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by [your] letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem.

Phil 4:14-16 Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity.

Acts 11:29-30 Then the disciples, (at Antioch) every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea: Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Ro 15:26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.

Several things can be garnered from these verses.

I. Widespread Cooperation.

This spirit of cooperation amongst the Local Churches in obedience to God's command was widespread in the early churches.

- A. **The Churches of Galatia. (I Cor 16:1)**
- B. **The Church at Corinth. (I Cor 16:1)**
- C. **The Church at Phillippi. (Phil 4:14-16)**
- D. **The Church at Antioch. (Acts 11:29-30)**
- E. **Churches in Macedonia and Achaia. (Ro 15:26)**
- F. **Corroborating Scriptures. (II Cor 8:1-15, 24; 9:1-15;)**

II. This Cooperation Was Both Church to Church and Church to Missionary.

A. Church to Church.

As we have already seen, the churches of Galatia, the church at Corinth, and the church at Antioch helped other churches.

B. Church to Missionary.

The Church at Phillippi helped the missionary Paul directly.

Cooperation in starting Churches-

In addition to financial cooperation among the Independent Baptist Churches in the New Testament, there was also cooperation in the starting of churches.

A. Churches are started by a man sent out from a Local Church.

Paul (Saul) was a missionary sent out from Antioch (**Acts 13**); and he went about starting churches in many cities.

B. Other churches helped in the ministry of Paul. (Phil 4:15)

C. Therefore, those other churches cooperated with the sending church in starting new churches by helping the man that the other church sent out.

Conclusion-

1. Contrary to what some may believe, the concept of the “Universal Church” as it has been historically taught is not taught in the Bible.
2. Although all of the churches were Independent and totally autonomous, voluntary cooperation was widespread in the early churches. This was a commandment of God that they willingly (**Ro 15:26-27**) and even joyously obeyed. Some gave as much as they were able in spite of deep poverty (**II Cor 8:1-4**) and even beyond their power they gave sacrificially. They cooperated with other churches not only in starting new churches but they also were willing to send support for the poorer churches in their times of need so that they could continue to exist and carry out the Great Commission in their respective areas.

Obviously, although the churches were autonomous, they exhibited a spirit of willing and joyous cooperation, many time sacrificially, that puts many churches today to shame. And anyone that opposes willing cooperation between their church and others is in disobedience to the plain teachings of scripture and will one day stand before God and have to give an answer; as we all will for the various ministries given to us by God.

THE MISSIONARY

In order to understand the call, the commission, the qualifications, the support and duties of, the missionary, we must define a few things that he is not and a few that he is.

1. He is not a pastor.

A pastor is the God-chosen leader of an organized Church; a missionary is the God-chosen man that is sent out to start churches and then helps install an indigenous pastor over it before he moves on. (**Titus 1:5-9**)

2. He is a member of a Local Independent Baptist Church.

Paul, the best known missionary of the Bible, was a member of the Local Church at Antioch; as was his traveling companion Barnabas. (**Acts 14:20-27**)

3. He is not a representative of any secular, ecumenical, or para-church organization.

This is born out by the New Testament in it's entirety since no missionary was ever sent out from any of these. They were always sent out from Local Churches.

In fact, concerning the latter two, the ecumenical organization and the para-church organization, it is impossible for them to send out missionaries, or anyone else for that matter, since they did not even exist in the New Testament. They were later inventions of heretics.

4. He is the representative of the Local Church that sent him out (**Acts 14:26-27**) and, by extension, a representative of Christ, as are all members of a Local Church. (**II Cor 5:20**)
5. Although evangelism is a large part of his job, he is not an evangelist.

NOTE: The modern day evangelist is not the same as the biblical evangelist. The biblical evangelist is one that carries the "good news;" i.e., a soul-winner and/or one who teaches Christianity, specifically the things concerning Christ in relation to the Kingdom of God.

- a. The three verses, **Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11; II Tim 4:5**, are the only instances of the word "evangelist" in the Bible. Then in **Acts ch. 8**, we find an explanation of the work of the biblical example of an evangelist, Philip.
- b. In the Bible, the word, "evangelist" is from the Greek word, εὐαγγελιστοῦ, *yoo-an-ghel-is-too*, from εὐαγγελιστής, *yoo-an-ghel-is-tace*, *one who announces glad tidings; an evangelist, preacher of the gospel, teacher of the Christian religion.*

This definition is in accord with **Acts ch. 8**, which describes the work done by Philip. And Philip is the only person in the entire New Testament that was specifically called an evangelist. (**Acts 21:8**)

- c. Timothy was told to do the work of an evangelist in **II Tim 4:5**; but, he was not called an evangelist himself. He was a missionary under Paul, and later he became the pastor of the church at Ephesus. This shows us that, although part of the work of both the missionary and the pastor is to win souls and teach the things concerning Christ and the Kingdom of God, they themselves are not called evangelists.
- d. From studying the scriptures concerning evangelists, we can see that the modern day evangelist is not the evangelist spoken of in the Bible. Today's "evangelist" would more properly be called a "revivalist." And in relation to our current study of Missions, it is obvious that although part of the missionary's job, and even his primary job when first visiting an area, is to do the work of an evangelist, he is not primarily an evangelist.

Now that we have covered what the missionary is and is not, we can get on to the call, the commission, the qualifications, the support, and the duties of, the missionary.

THE CALL OF THE MISSIONARY

The Missionary Is Called of God.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.

A. It is made known to BOTH the Church and the missionary.

:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said...

B. It is a matter of fasting and prayer; both before and after the call.

:2 As they ministered... and fasted, the Holy Ghost said...

:3 And when they had fasted and prayed... sent them away.

C. Although the Church agrees with the call, the actual calling of the missionary is by God through the Holy Ghost.

:2 ... the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

D. God calls men who are already busy about His work in their own Church.

:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas... Saul.

:2 As they ministered to the Lord...

It is obvious that these two men were already busy about the Lord's work in their home church at Antioch when they were called to a new ministry in missions.

If a man is a slackard in fulfilling his duties as a member of a Local Church, then why would he be any different on the Mission field? Isn't it logical that God would correct the problem of laziness first while the man is in an established church where strong Christians could be used to encourage him to get busy, rather than send him off to become a bad example to the new converts that he would lead to the Lord on the mission field? If he was a lazy example, then how could he, or even would he, try to help them organize into a living, aggressive, Gospel preaching, baptizing, discipling, New Testament Baptist Church when he previously would not even help his sending church be the same thing. More than likely, his lazy example would result in any churches he may start following in his footsteps and wind up lazying themselves out of existence and promoting the sending of souls in their area to Hell instead of winning them to Christ and helping them to Heaven.

One of my favorite sayings is that, "It's easier to steer a moving object than one that is standing still." And that specifically includes the ministry; as is born out in this passage of scripture. It is a biblical precept that is applicable to all Christians and that includes the Christians that are called to the mission field.

- E. God calls men out of churches that are busy about the Lord's work; and generally out of the inner group that are the most busy.

13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas , and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

:2 As they ministered to the Lord

NOTE: Remember, a large church is not necessarily a working church. And a small church is not necessarily a lazy church.

There are many things that affect the size of the church; but only one thing dictates if it is a working church. That one thing is: are they doing the work that God sent them there to do? If they are, then God is pleased with them and will trust them with further ministries, such as calling one or more of the members to be a missionary or planting and pastoring another church (as the missionary sometimes does) or even pastoring another church started by someone else (as Timothy did with the church at Ephesus that was started by Paul.)

A warning-

I have personally seen a pastor resist the leading of the Holy Spirit in this matter and try to clutch tight to the member that was called. By not agreeing with the Holy Spirit, he grieved the Holy Spirit and God withdrew His blessings from that pastor and that church. I am not judging him, I am merely using this as an example. He is God's servant and no one else's. He will answer to his master, God, as we all must. However, take this warning to heart. I don't care if God calls one of your most faithful members, let them go! Even if it is the only member you have that works in the church, let him go. Fast and pray about it with them and the other members of your church (specifically the inner circle of faithful workers) as they did in Antioch, and be sure that it is the leading of God, then let them go; else you risk the displeasure of God! If God calls them away, then He has a purpose. He knows the needs of the church he has put you

in as pastor, better than you do. If He deems it necessary, He will replace them with someone else. And that person will take up the slack for the one that has been called elsewhere. Or He may not replace them right away because He has something else in mind. I have personally had people leave the church that I pastor, and I did not understand it at all. Then later I found out that it was the best thing that ever happened to the church. It was God's way of directing me as pastor into a particular direction that He wanted me to lead the church; and He used the leaving of some of the people to make His direction not only clear but the only possible way we could go. In my current situation He has arranged things so that in 6 months He paid off \$120,000 of the Church debt and is leading us so that the rest of the debt will soon be paid off. And a mortgage free church building would not have been possible otherwise. And we would not have taken this direction that He wanted us to take if some of the people had not left over the last year. Not all that left did so for scriptural reasons; in fact one man was a wolf in sheep's clothing that was working for the devil. Others were duped by him, and told me so later, and some simply left quietly, not causing any trouble amongst the other members. But regardless of the reasons for their leaving, God used them anyway to accomplish His will for the church. In that instance the people that left did not go to the mission field, but it is still applicable to that situation.

If one of your members is called to the mission field, and you pray and fast about it with them and the rest of the church, and especially with those of the inner circle, and God makes it plain that He has truly called them away, then worry about pleasing God and not about what will you do without them! Keeping them there will only lead to sorrow and chaos as God withdraws His blessings and is forced to bring tribulation instead, in order to bring you and the rest of your church back into His will.

The church you pastor belongs to God and its success or failure is His business. You are there as the foreman; and your one concern is obeying and pleasing the owner. He guides and directs its course in any way He chooses. It may be by blessings or it may be by tribulation; or it may be by any combination of the two that He deems necessary. Therefore, since it is His, the ultimate outcome is in His hands, not yours.

**Ps 127:1 Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it:
except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh [but] in vain.**

And if He calls someone away to the mission field, then that is the best thing for the sending Church's success.

If you personally have a hard time handling it, then love God and trust Him and claim the promise in Romans. Doing so will lead you to peace of mind in the matter.

Ro 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to [his] purpose.

THE COMMISSION OF THE MISSIONARY

- A. There are two agencies involved in the commissioning of the missionary.
 1. The spiritual agency.

God commissions them.

Acts 13: 2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.

:4 So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia...

2. The physical agency.

The Local Church commissions them; being in agreement with the Holy Ghost.

:3 And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.

B. The mode of commissioning.

1. Fasting and prayer.

:3 And when they had fasted and prayed...

2. The laying on of hands.

:3 ... and laid [their] hands on them...

To understand the significance of the laying on of hands, we must go back to the Old Testament.

Deut 34:9 And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him: and the children of Israel hearkened unto him, and did as the LORD commanded Moses.

In this passage it is speaking of Moses transferring the leadership of the people to Joshua with the attendant responsibilities and authority.

Num 27:18 And the LORD said unto Moses , Take thee Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom [is] the spirit, and lay thine hand upon him; :19 And set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation; and give him a charge in their sight. :20 And thou shalt put [some] of thine honour upon him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. :21 And he shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask [counsel] for him after the judgment of Urim before the LORD: at his word shall they go out, and at his word they shall come in, [both] he, and all the children of Israel with him, even all the congregation. :22 And Moses did as the LORD commanded him: and he took Joshua, and set him before Eleazar the priest, and before all the congregation: :23 And he laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses .

It is obvious that the laying on of hands is a charge being given, along with the attendant authority and responsibilities. In Acts 13:3, the laying on of hands signifies the commission (the charge) being given to the Missionary giving him the authority of that Local Church to go out and start other Churches. As part of the commission, the scriptural authority to baptize is also given to the missionary as well as the responsibility to disciple the new converts.

In essence, the laying on of hands is the commission of the missionary with the authority and responsibility to carry out the Great Commission, in all of its three parts, on the authority of the sending church.

THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE MISSIONARY

A. He must be a member of a Local Church.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch... Barnabas... and Saul.

B. He must be a faithful, working member, already practicing mature spiritual habits.

Acts 13:1 Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers...

:2 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted...

It is obvious that they cannot be a novice. Whether one is given a job within the church or he is commissioned to go out from it as a missionary, prudence would dictate that a novice not be chosen to head up a ministry. Work in one, yes; but not head one up.

This very precept was given to Timothy, from God by the hand of Paul, concerning those who are given places of authority and/or responsibility in a church.

Whether it be as a pastor (bishop.)

I Tim 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

Or as a deacon.

:10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless.

As we have seen, this same precept applies to missionaries. In Acts 13:1-2 we find that the men that were chosen as missionaries were part of the inner circle that practiced mature spiritual habits such as **prophecy, teaching,** and various types of **ministries to the Lord.**

C. He must be in agreement with, and seek the approval of, the Church of which he is a member.

Acts 13:2-3 As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid [their] hands on them, they sent [them] away.

Every preacher that I personally know, and most that I have heard about, heard this (or something equivalent) from their pastor and others in the Church when they made the announcement that they had been called to preach, “We were wondering when you’d catch on! We’ve known that you’ve been called to preach for quite a while now!” And that includes those that were called to the mission field.

Remember, the devil also calls people to ministries, but ones out of the will of God. Wives, dads and moms, grandpas and grandmas, and, yes, even pastors out of zeal, call people to the ministry, also out of the will of God. So how do you know if it really is God calling you? Lets go to the Old Testament for the answer to that question:

Prov 11:14 Where no counsel [is], the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors [there is] safety.

Prov 15:22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

REMEMBER: We are in a WAR with the devil; and one of his favorite tricks is to get Christians to do good things that are out of the will of God for them. He would love to defeat you by sending you out to the wrong battlefield. Wise counsel will help you subvert his nefarious plan and help you make the right decision in this war.

Prov 24:3-6 Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: And by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches. A wise man [is] strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength. For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors [there is] safety.

If the prospective missionary spends time in prayer and fasting with his pastor and his church, then the safety of a multitude of counsellors is his; along with the assurance that his call is really from God.

THE SUPPORT OF THE MISSIONARY

We have pretty well covered this already in previous sections. Suffice it to say that the missionary should be supported by the Local Church; both his sending church and others of like faith and practice who willingly and joyously are obedient to God’s command for cooperation amongst the Independent (Local) Baptist Churches, and their missionaries in time of need.

THE DUTIES OF A MISSIONARY**I. Foreign Missionaries.**

- A. He is to carry out the three-fold Great Commission; doing so under the authority of his sending Church. **(Mt 28:18-20)**
 - 1. Win'em.
 - 2. Baptize'em.
 - 3. Grow'em.
- B. He is to be accountable to and report back to his sending church. **(Acts 11:2; 14:26-27)**
- C. He is to see a local pastor installed in the Mission church and then cut it loose as an organized, autonomous, Independent Baptist Church.

II. Home Missionaries.

- A. He is to carry out the three-fold Great Commission; doing so under the authority of his sending Church. **(Mt 28:18-20)**
 - 1. Win'em.
 - 2. Baptize'em.
 - 3. Grow'em.
- B. He is to be accountable to and report back to his sending church.
- C. He is to see that the Mission church, once it becomes organized, is cut loose from the sending church as an autonomous, Independent Baptist Church.
- D. Once the Church is self supporting, he is to notify the sending church(es) so that they can terminate support if they so wish.

NOTE: Some churches NEVER become self-supporting, depending on their area. But it is the responsibility of the missionary to keep the supporting church(es) appraised of the current ministries and financial status of the mission church.

Some churches cut off their support immediately when the church becomes organized as an Independent work. To cut off support solely for this reason is not scriptural. This can be seen by the fact, which we studied earlier, that the various NT churches supported other churches that were already organized, autonomous, Independent Baptist Churches. (See the section concerning the various churches that supported the original Church at Jerusalem in their time of need.)

III. At-Home Missionaries.

Every member of the Local Independent Baptist Church is a missionary to their town.

- A. They are to carry out the three-fold Great Commission; and they do so under the authority of the Church where they are members. **(Mt 28:18-20)**

Their duties are nearly identical to those of the other two types of missionaries.

The division of duties and responsibilities for the at-home missionaries is as follows.

- 1. Win'em. This is the responsibility of EVERY member.
- 2. Baptize'em. This is the responsibility of whichever member the church decides to

authorize to baptize. The pastor has the automatic authority; but any other member could also be authorized to administer the ordinance on behalf of the Church.

3. Grow'em. This is also the duty of EVERY member.

NOTE: Although the responsibilities of the at-home missionaries are common to the church as a body, the pastor is still the “**overseer**” of the church and, as such, should lead the church in its decisions and direction concerning conferred authority to baptize and the matter of discipleship (the “grow'em” part) of the new members. Such things as the fitness and appropriateness of a certain member being involved in a particular ministry (baptizing, discipleship, deacon, etc.) are areas where the pastor needs to take great care when recommending the candidate to the church or making recommendations against their fitness. Great care must be taken concerning the growth and feelings of the candidate, absolutely; on the other hand, great care also must be taken that the church does not suffer because of the candidate. Bear in mind the scriptural warning about a novice in First Timothy chapter three. Although those scriptures specifically speak of the offices of pastor and deacon, the application of them to those members in various other ministries in the church would be quite appropriate, and prudent. (There are also many other scriptures that make such an application appropriate. See the following list of scriptures concerning the unlearned and the novice and the dangers they face, as well as the pastor's responsibility for what is taught in the church and toward those that teach: I Chr 13:9-10; Prov 3:13-26 et al; Ro 14:13; I Tim 1:3-7; II Tim 2:2; II Tim 2:23-3:9; Heb 13:17; II Pet 2:1-3; Eph 4:11-16) I personally (in churches that I have pastored as well as in churches where I have served in various ministries under other pastors) have experienced the problems that happen when new and/or novice members in the church have been used in the various ministries of the church. Also, because of differences in how the people in the various parts of the world must be ministered to, someone's fitness and effectiveness in and for a particular ministry in one part of the world DOES NOT automatically make them fit for even that very same ministry in your church. You need to observe them for a while and make sure that they are able to effectively minister in your area. Such things as cultural differences, religious differences, as well as other factors, need to be taken into account. And by religious differences I mean things like what is the predominant religion in the area they come from. Is it the same as the area where you are pastoring? If not, then they need to learn about the religious beliefs and backgrounds of those in your area and how to deal with the people holding those beliefs before being placed over any sensitive ministries in your church. Also, if they come from the bible-belt then the way to deal with people in a non-bible-belt area is something totally different than what they have been used to. Although the message is the same, they need to be familiar with the differences in methods to be used. To slam them into a ministry when they are not familiar with your area is to do them a disservice. It will not only harm the church but it may, and probably will, also harm them. They are not only novices in your area but they are in actuality (especially in such areas as Utah) as much foreigners as if they were in a foreign country because the customs and beliefs vary so much from area to area, even within the United States. We are so short of workers in the average Independent Baptist

Church that we take whatever help makes itself available. This is a very dangerous thing to do and almost always leads to trouble when it concerns a sensitive ministry in the church. Check on the newcomer. Where did they come from? How did they serve where they were before? What were the customs and religious beliefs there? Were they faithful to carry out their ministries there and were they absolutely loyal to, and subservient to the leadership of, their pastor. Also, what are the methods they're used to using? Then, and only then, can you properly decide if they can function in your area effectively. And if they are just newly saved, don't even consider using them in a sensitive or difficult ministry until they are first trained and tried. For either group, training them yourself or placing them under an experienced worker, who is absolutely loyal to the pastor, is the best method for training and testing them while still encouraging them to be involved by getting them involved. I have, unfortunately, personally learned the hard way and have served with other pastors and watched them learn the hard way about the trouble that can result from using a newly saved, a newcomer, or a novice, in an important ministry in the church; but you don't have to. As I have said many times before, there are two ways to learn: by your own experiences or by the experiences of others. In the case of unpleasant and potentially harmful areas such as use of members in various ministries, it would be much less painful and harmful to you and your church if you learned from my experiences and the experiences of other pastors that have already been through it, instead of having to make all of your own mistakes in order to learn this lesson.

B. They are to be accountable to their home church.

C. They are to be involved in appropriate ministries in their church; and are always to be subservient to the scriptural leadership of their pastor.

Summary- It is obvious that the duties of Foreign, Home, and at-Home Missionaries are basically the same. The driving biblical principle behind all missions is the authority given to the Local, Independent, Baptist Church by its founder, the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Great Commission. The command to win souls was given to every Christian. Yes! But the command to, "Win'em, baptize'em, and grow'em," the three parts of the Commission for missions, was given EXCLUSIVELY to the Local Baptist Church at Jerusalem and from there it was passed down through the centuries to all of the churches subsequently started from that seed church.

There are no "Lone Ranger," churches. The authority to start a new church must come from an existing church in the direct lineage from that first Baptist Church at Jerusalem. Along with that authority goes the Great Commission in its totality. Included in the authority thus passed on is the proper authority and mode of baptism and the obligation to train the newcomers to the faith. The bible plainly teaches that the Local Baptist Church is the divinely commissioned instrument, instituted and chosen by God himself, for the propagation of the Great Commission in its triunity of "Win'em, baptize'em, and grow'em."

EPILOGUE

There are many groups that send out missionaries and they are to be applauded for their efforts and the number of souls that are won to Christ thereby. However, as we have seen the responsibility is not theirs, but ours. God instituted the original seed church at Jerusalem. It was what today would be called an Independent Baptist Church because the members all had the baptism of John the Baptist including the founder, Jesus Christ, and they passed that baptism on down to all of the other New Testament Churches that sprang out of that Church. Along with the command to win souls, which was given to every believer, the Commission given by Christ to that church was to not only win them, but to also baptize them with the baptism of John the Baptist in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and then help the newly baptized converts to grow to Christian maturity. This commission was not given to the “Lone Ranger Christian,” but to the Local Church body. By giving the commission to them, the church, and commanding them to pass it on to their progeny, new churches started from that church, Christ guaranteed the propagation of the gospel to the world. In addition, He guaranteed that new converts would be baptized, scripturally, (as a picture of His death, burial, and resurrection) and pass on God’s message to the world generation after generation until Christ comes back again. To preserve His gospel, His Word, His Church, and instructions for the training and maturing of His people, God instituted a self-propagating temple called the Local Church, to which He gave the commission and the promise of His presence through the eons until the end of the Church Age. And then gave to them a teaching manual called the Bible to guide them in the carrying out of His Great Commission.

As workers and pastors in New Testament, Independent Baptist Churches, be faithful to the mission which God has entrusted to you, worldwide missions.

Mt 28:18-20

:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

Acts 1:8

:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

May God bless you as you obey Him by serving in a Local, New Testament, Baptist Church.

It has been said, and rightly so:

**“The mission
of the
Local Church
is missions.”**

Dr. D E Van Buskirk

Ogden, UT - July 20, 2000
Salt Lake City, UT - Dec. 12, 2009