

# GOD'S MANDATE *for* MISSIONS

KEN FLEMING



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*God's Mandate for Missions*

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# STUDENT INSTRUCTIONS

When God created the world He placed Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and told them to multiply and fill the earth with people. Adam and Eve enjoyed a wonderful relationship with God until sin broke that relationship. Ever since then God has been reaching out to man in His grace. The Bible is the story of how He has been doing that. At the present time God is using His people to “make disciples of all nations.” *That’s missions!* It is the most wonderful enterprise in the world.

In this study you will discover many aspects of world missions, beginning with its biblical foundation. You will learn what kind of people God uses and how He calls them to become involved; the Biblical strategy of missions and the special role of the church in fulfilling His plan. Methods, logistics, and the challenge of reaching people who are living in different cultural settings will be discussed. Then there will be a survey of the broad sweep of history as to how the gospel has spread since the time of Jesus. This will lead to a review of the contemporary world and the work that God is doing today.

## Lessons You Will Study

1. The Global Perspective of Missions . . . . .	5
2. Biblical Motives for Missions . . . . .	11
3. The Individual Call to Missions . . . . .	19
4. Qualified and Ready . . . . .	29
5. God’s Purpose and Strategy for Missions . . . . .	37
6. Using Methods in Missions . . . . .	47
7. The Role of the Local Church in Missions . . . . .	57
8. Missionary Lifestyle, Discipline, and Stewardship . . . . .	67
9. Relating to Other Cultures . . . . .	77
10. Missions in History . . . . .	87
11. Missions Today . . . . .	99
12. Missions in the Battle of the Ages . . . . .	109

## **Course Components**

This course has two parts: this study course and the exam booklet.

## **How To Study**

This study has twelve chapters, and each chapter has its own exam. Begin by asking God to help you understand the material. Read the chapter through at least twice, once to get a general idea of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up any Bible references given.

Begin studying immediately, or if you are in a group, as soon as the group begins. We suggest that you keep a regular schedule by trying to complete at least one chapter per week.

## **Exams**

In the exam booklet there is one exam for each chapter (exam 1 covers chapter 1 of the course). Do not answer the questions by what you think or have always believed. The questions are designed to find out if you understand the material given in the course.

After you have completed each chapter, review the related exam and see how well you know the answers. If you find that you are having difficulty answering the questions, review the material until you think you can answer the questions. It is important that you read the Bible passages referenced as some questions may be based on the Bible text.

## **How Your Exams Are Graded**

Your instructor will mark any incorrectly answered questions. You will be referred back to the place in the course where the correct answer is to be found. After finishing this course with a passing average, you will be awarded a certificate.

If you enrolled in a class, submit your exam papers to the leader or secretary of the class who will send them for the entire group to the Correspondence School.

See the back of the exam booklet for more information on returning the exams for grading.

## 1

THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE  
OF MISSIONS**1. Introduction**

The most vital task in the world today is not the discovery of ways to solve the great problems facing mankind. There certainly are immense problems—the population explosion, diminishing natural resources, environmental pollution, nuclear weapons, disease, and so on—about which every serious Christian should be concerned. There are also enormous problems to be solved in the spheres of economics, society, and politics, which cannot be ignored. But to the Christian none of these is as important as the task of world evangelism. This vital Christian mission stands alone as the most pressing need in the world, as it affects the *eternal* welfare of every person born on this planet.

What do we mean when we use the word “mission,” or “missions”? In its primary sense missions is the communicating of the *evangel* (the gospel, the good news concerning salvation from sin through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ) to unreached people all over the earth. For practical purposes the subject of *missions* is usually narrowed in its meaning to distinguish it from *evangelism*, which is communicating the gospel to people in similar cultures to our own. Missions, in its technical sense, is evangelism across cultural lines. Missions is more than the simple announcement of the fundamental facts of the gospel. It may be said that *missions is the effective communication of the gospel to all peoples, resulting in their salvation from sin, their training as disciples of the Lord Jesus, and their ongoing involvement in a local church*. It follows, then, that *missionaries* are the people who are the communicators of the gospel across cultural lines.

In this course . . .

- You will learn that it is the responsibility of every believer to be involved in world missions in some way.
- You will discern the worldwide perspective of the Bible and how God uses it to motivate His people toward missions.
- You will examine the necessary qualities for missionaries and how God calls them.
- You will discover the strategy of missionary work and effective methods to use.

At the heart of missions is the command of the Lord Jesus Christ to His disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15). In many local churches, missions is considered to be of little importance. This is an incorrect view of God's program for our times. Missionary enterprise is central to God's program. Involvement in this enterprise is the thrust of the great commission of the Lord to make disciples of all nations.

Hopefully this study will stimulate *you*, as a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, to personally respond to the fact that "the fields . . . are already white for harvest" (John 4:35).

## **2. The Global Perspective of the Bible**

God is at work in the nations of the world, calling from among them a people for His Name (Acts 15:14). God is also at work among His ancient people, the Jews, in preserving a remnant of them for His future purposes (Rom. 11:1-5). And God is at work in His church over which Christ is the Head (Ephesians 2 and 3). However, God's universal interest is not limited to this age. Through the ages He has concerned Himself with His entire creation—a perspective that is clearly revealed in the Bible. From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is a missionary book.

### **2.1. Missions in the Old Testament**

It is commonly thought that the Old Testament is primarily the record of God's dealings with His chosen people, the Jews. From that premise some have assumed that until Jesus commissioned His disciples, God was scarcely interested in the other peoples of the world (Matt. 28:19). Both

ideas are false. God has always revealed Himself as a universal God for all people everywhere. From the very first verses, the Bible witnesses to God's worldwide interest. Let us consider the Old Testament record.

At creation the command of the Creator was, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). After the flood the command to Noah and his family was similar: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth" (Gen. 9:1). Later, when men tried to settle in Babel in defiance of God's command, they were scattered over the face of the whole earth by the confusion of tongues (Gen. 11:9). When God narrowed down his dealings with people to one man (Abraham), God said to him, "In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen. 12:3). At the time of the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt, God reminded Pharaoh through Moses that the Name of the Lord would be declared in all the earth (Ex. 9:16). Again and again in the Psalms we are reminded that the whole earth will be filled with His glory (Ps. 72:17-19). Hebrew prophets were also international in the scope of their prophecy. "The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness" (Isa. 26:9). These references could easily be multiplied, but they are sufficient to show that in the Old Testament God was concerned about the whole world.

## 2.2. Gentile Old Testament Believers

Both individuals and nations who were outside the covenant blessings of Israel received the message of the goodness and mercy of God. Think of Melchizedek, the Canaanite King who met Abraham in his role of the priest of the Most High God (Gen. 14:18 ff). Or of Job who probably predates all other writers of the Old Testament. There was Jethro the Midianite and father-in-law of Moses who came to know God (Ex. 18:10-12). Rahab of Jericho became a believer in God from the reports she had heard (Josh. 2:8-15). Consider also Ruth the Moabitess who came to faith in God through Naomi (Ruth 1:16-17), and Naaman the Syrian who, as a result of being healed of his leprosy, became a secret believer in the God of Israel (2 Kings 5:14-19).

Besides these Gentile individuals, God bore witness to the great Gentile empires that surrounded the tiny kingdom of Israel. Both Joseph and Moses left an indelible mark on the nation of Egypt as a result of their witness (see Gen. 41:25; Ex. 5:1). Jonah was sent by God to Ninevah in Assyria, and his message had an electrifying effect on the people as they literally dressed in sackcloth and ashes expressing their repentance (Jonah 3:1-10). God had

some special witnesses for the great empire of Babylon in Daniel and his three Hebrew friends Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego (Dan. 3:1-30; 4:1-37). Daniel also witnessed to the next great empire—Persia.

Clearly God took care to leave a witness in the great nations of the world. From the record of God's judgment of these Gentile nations it is clear that God held them morally responsible to know God and to obey Him.

### **2.3. Missions in the New Testament**

In the New Testament, the worldwide perspective broadens out to a full panorama. No reader can miss the missionary picture which is projected on the screen of the gospels, the Acts, the Epistles, and the Revelation. In the gospels the picture is vivid and clear. At the birth of Christ the angels announced to the shepherds “good tidings of great joy which will be to all people” (Luke 2:10). When Christ was presented as a baby in the temple the aged prophet Simeon said, “My eyes have seen Your salvation which you have prepared before the face of all peoples” (Luke 2:30). When Christ was introduced to the people of Israel by John the Baptist, the striking words were, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29). Early in His ministry, Jesus drew attention to the global concerns of God for Jews and Gentiles both in public (in the synagogue in Nazareth; Luke 4:24-27) and private (to Nicodemus; John 3:16).

One of the first parables Jesus told—of the wheat and the tares—emphasized the same truth, in that the field in which the wheat and tares was sown represents the world (Matt. 13:38). The Lord Jesus later proclaimed, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (John 12:32). Between the day of His resurrection and His ascension to heaven, the Scriptures record Him commanding His disciples. “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15); “Go . . . and make disciples of all the nations . . .” (Matt. 28:19); and “You shall be witnesses to Me . . . to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). So from the angelic announcement at His birth to the final command before His ascension, the life and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth had a global outlook and purpose.

### **2.4. Missions in the Book of Acts**

In the book that we call the Acts of the Apostles the missionary outreach takes on a new dimension. Christ's ascension made way for the descent of



the Holy Spirit, whose great work is to empower and encourage Christ's disciples to spread the gospel around the world. The task of witnessing was not to be done by simple human effort but through the power of the Spirit of God who indwells every believer. The Lord Jesus promised His disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8). The story recorded in the book of Acts is the story of men, energized by the Spirit of God, moving out with the news of salvation. Peter, Stephen, Paul, Barnabas, John Mark, Silas, Timothy—one after another, these men come before us in Acts, fulfilling their missionary commission to be witnesses to the world. The obvious outline of the book reveals an ever-expanding sphere of witness. The key verse (Acts 1:8) opens up this movement:

1. The witness in Jerusalem in chapters 2–7.
2. The witness in nearby Judea and Samaria in chapters 8 and 9.
3. The expanding witness to the remote parts of the earth in chapters 10–28.

The missionary activity of Paul and his fellow missionaries is the focus of chapters 9 to 28 of the book of Acts. Paul's life and work serve as the outstanding example of the effective missionary. Wise missionaries and mission leaders constantly return to the biblical pattern established by Paul for their guide to effective missions today. As you consider Paul's missionary work, study maps showing the journeys he took and the places he went. (Most Bibles have maps in the back.)

In their missionary work they concentrated on the strategic cities in the areas to which they traveled. Then they taught the new believers and planted local churches before they moved on to the next location. Note their concern as they revisited these young churches for pastoral care and encouragement so that the fellowship would be firmly established (Acts 14:21-23). But even this was not the end of Paul's missionary activity.

## **2.5. Missions in the New Testament Epistles**

The narrative of mission history during its first thirty years is given to us in Acts. Most of the remaining books in the New Testament are letters written by Paul, James, Peter, and John. Most of these letters are *missionary letters*, written by missionaries to local churches established by missionaries. Other letters were written to individuals like Timothy and

Titus who were themselves missionaries. This fact is often not realized by readers of the New Testament, but it is important for us to understand that missions is central in all of them.

In this light, Romans is seen as a detailed statement of the doctrine of salvation needed by a young mission church. First and Second Corinthians are the letters of the missionary outlining church order and discipline for recent converts struggling with local problems. Colossians was written to combat a heretical teaching that threatened the new believers in Colossae, and Philippians to encourage the infant church in Philippi. They are full of situations of living people in a mission environment.

Roman province of Asia (Revelation 2 and 3), the book goes on to unfold the worldwide activities of God in the climactic scenes of history. God acts to establish the rule and reign of righteousness over the whole world. Then, the whole earth shall be filled with His glory, and God will consummate the far-reaching plans of which missions now are just a part. Then, God's global purposes will have been accomplished and, in the words of the old hymn, "Jesus shall reign where'er the sun does his successive journeys run."

### **3. Conclusion**

From Genesis to Revelation the Bible is a missionary book. God is revealed as a missionary God. The God who made the world also loved the world; He sent His Son to be the Savior of the world and commissioned Christ's followers to take the good news of His Son to all the peoples in the world. The global missionary perspective of the Bible is clear.

# GOD'S MANDATE *for* MISSIONS

**EXAM BOOKLET**  
**AK '12 (3 UNITS) GMM**

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STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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ADDRESS

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CITY, STATE, ZIP

COURSE GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

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INSTRUCTOR



*Exam developed by Emmaus Correspondence School, founded in 1942.*

## A NOTE ON THE EXAMS

The exams are designed to check your knowledge of the course material and the Scriptures. After you have studied a chapter, review the exam questions for that lesson. If you have difficulty in answering the questions, re-read the material. If questions contain a Scripture reference, you may use your Bible to help you answer them. If your instructor has provided a single page Answer Sheet, record your answer on that sheet. This exam contains the following types of questions:

### **MULTIPLE CHOICE**

You will be asked to write in the letter of the correct answer at the space on the right. Here is an example:

The color of grass is

- A. blue                      C. yellow  
B. green                     D. orange

     **B**     

### **WHAT DO YOU SAY?**

Questions headed this way are designed to help you express your ideas and feelings. You may freely state your own opinions in answer to such questions.

### **RETURNING THE EXAM**

See the back of this exam booklet for instructions on returning your exam for grading.

**DO NOT PHOTOCOPY THESE EXAM PAGES**

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**NOW I HAVE A QUESTION . . .**

As you complete the exams, you may have additional questions about the course material that have not been answered. In the area below, you may ask any question you have related to the chapters you have studied. Your instructor will respond to your questions as best as he or she can.

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# CHAPTER 1 EXAM

## THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE OF MISSIONS

### EXAM GRADE

***Before starting this exam, write your name and address on the front of this Exam Booklet.***

*Directions: Read each question carefully and write the letter of the correct answer in the blank space on the right. Use the separate answer sheet if provided.*

1. The most vital task for the Christian in the world today is  
A. controlling the population explosion  
B. world evangelism  
C. eliminating environmental pollution  
D. replenishing natural resources \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. The primary sense of missions is  
A. aid to underdeveloped countries  
B. a determined effort to accomplish a goal  
C. the communicating of the gospel globally  
D. imposing a religion on other countries \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. In the Old Testament God revealed himself  
A. exclusively to His chosen people, the Jews  
B. only to certain people who had proved themselves faithful  
C. as a universal God for all people everywhere  
D. to the priests, the only way he could communicate with the people \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. Among the following, who was outside the covenant blessings of Israel but received the message of the goodness and mercy of God?  
A. Melchizedek      C. Joseph  
B. Jonah              D. all of the above \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. A clear missionary picture is present in the Gospels  
A. in the miracle of turning water into wine  
B. at the birth of Christ  
C. in the cleansing of the lepers  
D. in Jesus teaching in other villages than His own \_\_\_\_\_

- 6. Acts 1:8 is a key verse mentioning the success of missions due to
  - A. the obedience of the disciples
  - B. the power of the Holy Spirit
  - C. the message of the witnesses
  - D. the preaching of Paul\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 7. Which of the following is mentioned as fulfilling the missionary commission to be a witness to the world?
  - A. Stephen
  - B. Simon
  - C. Gamaliel
  - D. Tabitha\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 8. The focus of chapters 9 to 28 of Acts is
  - A. Paul's credentials
  - B. the establishment of different religions
  - C. the reputation of leading Christians
  - D. the missionary activity of Paul and his companions\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 9. Paul and his fellow missionaries concentrated on
  - A. teaching missions in the most important countries of their time
  - B. converting all the people in their own country first
  - C. giving the gospel in strategic cities
  - D. making sure those hearing the gospel understood Jewish traditions as well\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 10. Most of the New Testament epistles are
  - A. missionary letters
  - B. instructions from Mark and Luke on church conduct
  - C. love letters from the apostles to their wives
  - D. too localized to be of any use today\_\_\_\_\_

**WHAT DO YOU SAY?**

In your own words, why is God considered a missionary God?

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