

Cross-Cultural Perspectives



The Full Circle Church

The church at Antioch was a model full circle church. They were a self-supporting, self-propagating, self-governing indigenous church. Yet, it didn't stop there. They recognized with privileges come responsibilities. They were a mature church, capable of reproducing themselves through fulfilling the Great Commission, thus completing the full circle. Others invested in them through establishing the Antioch church in Acts 11. They wanted to be involved in doing the same in different locations. It was here that Paul and others would use as their home base for missionary journeys.

The writer of Romans states, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things" (Romans 10:15). John Mordomo in "Shifting Paradigms in Missions" writes that "it is becoming clear to most missiologists who look across the mountain ranges of the future that the 'feet of those who bring good news' are rapidly changing color. New streams of brown, black, yellow, and red feet are joining the white to proclaim the salvation message." Notice he said they were joining, not replacing, the white feet.

He goes on to say that the traditional "support-raising" model may not work in many nations. "While the model works well in industrialized nations in which the Protestant work ethic is firmly embedded in the culture and people have disposable income at the available at the end of each month, it is not effective for most..." I will not spend a lot of time commenting on the validity or lack of validity of his observations. I would say, however, that it is extremely important that each nation find, implement and sustain a systematic way of supporting the regional missions program of the Foreign Missions Division. Why? A global mission is the responsibility of the global church. As it has rightly been said, we are taking "the whole gospel to the whole world by the whole church."

The promise of world evangelism was not given to a select group of people in a few nations. In order for this pivotal commission to be accomplished it requires the proverbial all hands on deck. Every local church and every member needs to be involved; and has the privilege of being involved.

Every church, around the globe, needs to be trained to be a missions-minded church. The responsibilities of reaching the lost world should be taught to converts. Jerry Rankin and Ed Stetzer in *Spiritual Warfare and Missions* state that we are to "live out the missionary heart of God who is telling

all Christians, everywhere, to go some place else with the gospel.” Everyone, everywhere, needs to be in obedience to the commission of Matthew 28:19-20. This should be implemented from all points of the globe to all points of the globe.

Randy Adams mentions that a church can become a missions-minded church by regularly practicing these simple steps:

1. Teach missions
2. Preach missions
3. Give to missions
4. Pray for missions
5. Live missions.

I challenge you to raise up local and national churches that are:

1. Missions-loving
2. Missions-living
3. Missions-giving
4. Missions-going
5. Missions-sending

What an opportunity to be part of a church that is encircling the globe!