

Cross-Cultural Perspectives from the Director



Missions Unchangeables

Some things in missions never change. They courageously defy trends and serve as solid anchors. A morning rendezvous with Acts 13 aptly reminds me of a list of *missions unchangeables*.

1. **We are an apostolic church (13:1).** Missions is the natural outcome of a thriving, living church. A church with a passion for God will also have a passion for reaching the world.
2. **We minister to the Lord (13:2).** He is our focus. The things we do are done as unto the Lord. He is a faithful rewarder. Do not be discouraged when you are seemingly overlooked or underappreciated by others including those you are called to reach.
3. **We are separated (13:2).** We are different. We are foreigners at home and foreigners on the field. We never seem to really fit in. By the way, where is home anyway? Missionaries can seldom really answer that question. We are set apart for a purpose and on purpose.

4. **We are set aside for the work (13:2).** Missions is often viewed as fascinating, thrilling, and adventurous. Beyond the glamour it is plain work. It is a work that must be done while it is day, for the night is soon coming, when no man can work. One man said there are three secrets to success: 1. Work; 2. Work; 3. Work.
5. **We are called (13:2).** We are specific, special people called for a specific, special purpose.
6. **We fast and pray (13:3).** There is no spiritual way around it. Our journey began with prayer and fasting and will be sustained by it. It is still a ministerial priority.
7. **We have been touched by others (13:3).** They have laid their hands on us. The vision God has revealed in private has stood the test of public scrutiny. We are backed by the church. We are backed by God. We go forth with the knowledge that the faithful will stand behind us.
8. **We are sent away and sent forth (13:3-4).** Deputation is not a career. We proceed through its trail as quickly as possible and stick around no longer than necessary. Souls are waiting.
9. **We will see God move.** Miracles will happen. Expect it. People will be hungry to hear God's Word. It will not return void. It will challenge, convict, and change. God uses us in truth encounter (clear declaration of truth) and power encounter (clear demonstration of God's power). Both go hand-in-hand.
10. **We will encounter spiritual warfare (13:8-11).** Never expect to walk into enemy territory without a fight. We will be victorious. The battle belongs to the Lord.

This short list from the experiences of first-ever missionaries under career appointment represents not only our heritage but our destiny. They are things we must never forget. They are missions unchangeables.