



Why the Ministry of Giving to Missions is so Important

George Verwer

I was amazed to see the statistics for what the more wealthy nations give to battling global poverty, disease and all the other huge problems that so-called less developed nations have. No nation could really be considered generous, but some do better than others. It usually is around 2% of their budget. Of course, on top of that is all kinds of money from Foundations, most of which are not Christian.

Of course, global missions on the part of God's people is a totally different challenge as we want to build God's Kingdom (His Church) around the world in all of its many aspects. The shock is that probably approximately only 5% of Christian giving goes outside of its nation of origin.

WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT TO GIVE TO GLOBAL MISSIONS?



Let me give some reasons. Keep in mind that I have lived overseas now for 60 years. That has only been made possible due to the people and churches supporting us. Living in Mexico, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, India, Nepal, Germany, Pakistan and the UK, as well as on our ships in many nations has taught us many lessons.

I became convinced about the extreme importance of people giving to global missions outside their own nation.

- 1 The commands of our Lord in Matthew 28:19 and other passages tell us to “GO AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF ALL NATIONS”. Radical stories like the Good Samaritan in Luke 10 are a dynamite wake up call.
- 2 The examples of giving recorded in the Book of Acts.
- 3 The strong teaching about giving in 2 Corinthians 8 & 9.
- 4 Missionary history shows the important role of finance. When the right people, who especially know how to handle funds, receive the money, great things are accomplished, especially when prayer and faith are the bottom line and self and self-interests are daily crucified.
- 5 I have seen in many of our supporters that they don't think what they give is that important (one of the main reasons I am writing this). Even most people who have the privilege of giving large amounts don't think it is that important. Such people are less than 1% of the global population of believers. We should thank God for such people, who often are under strong attack from the Evil One. For me, on a human level, they have one of the most difficult and important tasks in all of God's global programme. The other side of the coin is that most major donors with this kind of opportunity mainly give to needs in their own nation — many only in their State or part of the nation. Others only give to their own church, and others even to non-Christian causes (not totally wrong).

Focus on priorities

Oswald J Smith was probably the greatest mission advocate and activist in the last century. His strong conviction was that only a small percentage of Christians give priority to overseas missions and the more unreached. Do read his book *The Challenge of Missions*. Therefore, those few should give most of their giving to global missions. History shows that even lukewarm Christians and non-Christians will give to many of the needs at home, including church buildings where billions are spent.



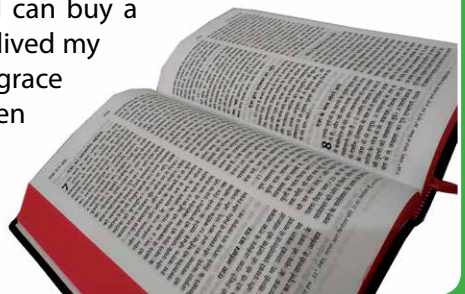
The money that some pastors and Christian leaders receive as salaries has provided me 65 years of battling discouragement. That this kind of practice has spread to other parts of the world just blows my mind. When African pastors of huge churches surrounded by extreme poverty are flying around in their personal jets, something has gone seriously wrong. When they say God gave it to them, it makes me want to become an atheist. No wonder I became such an outspoken radical back in the 50's and 60's. Reading my new book *Confessions of a Toxic Perfectionist* will help people understand my sins, mistakes and struggles — some of which continue. You might want to read *Messiology* first.

If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person?

[1 John 3:17]

Radical conscience and grace

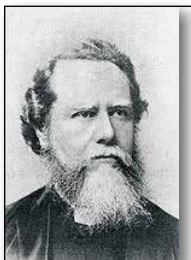
We have seen what even small gifts can do. We remember the story that Jesus told about the widow's mite. Yesterday I struggled buying a new deodorant stick for £3 knowing that I can buy a Bible in India for a similar price. I have lived my whole life like this, but did by God's grace learn how to spend money — yes, even on myself. Marriage surely helped. Really, radicals like the way I was in my early years perhaps should not get married.



Our daily struggle

The fact that even many believers don't have their own Bible is almost a daily struggle. William MacDonald, quoting certain verses, hinted to that in his famous book *True Discipleship*. We are glad that in Special Projects, thanks to our donors and praying friends, we are changing that for many tens of thousands. That is only one example of what finance can do. How can we ever think that our giving is not that important?

God uses people



Yes, God supplies but He uses people. Missionaries, sent out and supported by biblical churches and individuals, are important. Do you know how many books have been written about just one missionary, Hudson Taylor? ***My view is that those who give are just as important.*** Up to a few years ago there were hardly any books at all about such people. Praise His Name, their treasure is in heaven. Randy Alcorn wrote a book about that.

It is one of the ways we can tell Jesus and others that we love them. It is one of the best ways to honour our great God and show that we are living by faith, trusting him if in our later years we seem to have given away too much. That is not the biggest problem among God's people. It is a powerful way to demonstrate that we are not just more words on a HEAD trip, but obedient people of action. We remember James 1:22: ***"Do not merely listen to the word... Do what it says."***

In closing, I want to give thanks to those of you who are giving to Global Missions. I hope these words, that I believe the Lord put on my heart, will bless you and encourage you as you face all the challenges and complexities of Life.

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