

"Mission is the witness of a local congregation in its place in the whole of its gathered and scattered life, in its deeds of justice and mercy, and in its words that proclaim the gospel." (Becoming a Missionary Church)

B. BLESS

- i. Be Praying
- ii. Listen
- iii. Eat
- iv. Serve
- v. Story



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LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What distinction do you think Chaturvedi Badrinath is making between a religious book and the Bible? What does he mean by “the history of the human race”?
- “Being a blessing” by itself is not an adequate description of “the mission of God’s people,” but what aspects of our mission would be challenged or improved by thinking in such Abrahamic terms?
- What does it mean to say that election is woven together with mission like cords of a rope? (See Gen. 12:1-3; 18:18-19.)
- What was the original mission of God? How does the restorative mission of God relate to it?
- Abraham was called to leave his land of idolatry. What elements of our present cultural and social context do you need to “leave” if you are to follow Abraham in “the obedience of faith”?
- How does the link between the church’s mission and godly ethics challenge your own life and the life of the church?
- Abraham was called to teach his descendants the ways of the Lord that they would do what is right and just. How is this concept woven into our own “Great Commission”? (Matt. 28:18-20)

Becoming People of God’s Mission – 2 *Out of the Nations; For the Nations*

Jerry Cisar — May 5, 2024

Text: Genesis 12:1-3; Galatians 3:13-14

Introduction

“I can’t understand why you missionaries present the Bible to us in India as a book of religion. It is not a book of religion—and anyway we have plenty of books of religion in India. We don’t need any more! *I find in your Bible a unique interpretation of universal history, the history of the whole of creation and the history of the human race. And therefore a unique interpretation of the human person as a responsible actor in history.* That is unique. There is nothing else in the whole religious literature of the world to put alongside it.” – Chaturvedi Badrinath

If the Bible tells the true story of the whole world, then why does it single out one person, one family, and one nation?

I. Election out of the Nations for the Nations (Gen. 12:1-3)

A. Human ability to find God

- i. The World Post-Rebellion (Gen. 4-11)
- ii. Apart from God’s gracious intervention, rebellious humanity could only produce death and could never spread life.

B. God chooses one man through whom he will bless everyone.

- i. *God intervenes in history to bring the whole world back under his blessing.* (Gen. 12:1-3)
- ii. What is the purpose of God choosing Abram?

- To restore blessing to all peoples on earth.

- iii. Election for the purpose of God's restorative mission
 - a) God's particular election has as its goal his impartial acceptance of people from every people, tribe, language, and tongue.
 - Acts 10:34-35
 - Galatians 3:13-14
 - b) *The people who will be blessed by Abraham's descendants are the same people as those excluded from the blessing in Genesis 10-11.*
 - Gen. 10:5
 - Gen. 10:20
 - Gen. 10:31
 - Revelation 7:9

God's election of Abram out of the nations, tribes, and languages has resulted in peoples from all nations, tribes, and languages to be included.

C. Election and mission are woven together like the cords of a rope.

Any understanding of election apart from its purpose in this mission is misguided.

- i. Gen. 12:1-3
- ii. Gen. 18:18
- iii. Gen. 22:18
- iv. Gen. 26:4
- v. Gen. 28:14c-15a

II. Ethics Out of the World for the World (Gen. 18:18-19)

- A. Election (19a), Ethical living (19b), Mission accomplished (19c).
- B. What are the principles of conduct governing Abraham or his descendants? (Gen. 18:19)
 - i. This conversation occurs while on the way to Sodom.
 - a) Sodom had already been blessed by Abraham (Gen. 14).
 - b) "The outcry against Sodom..." (Gen. 18:20-21)
 - c) Genesis 19
 - d) Ezekiel 16:49-50
 - e) Romans 1:18-32
 - ii. What is meant by "doing what is right and just"?

III. Entering the Commission

- A. Abraham's "going"
 - i. Like Abraham we are called out of our idolatry.
 - ii. We are called to go into the places where justice and righteousness are needed.
 - iii. As Abraham's descendants, caring for the poor is required (Gal. 2:9-10).

"The problem faced by the missionary tradition was that the liberal tradition collapsed eschatology into the Western progress story; thus, mission simply contributes to the ongoing cultural, political, social, and technological progress of the West. The evangelical tradition reduced eschatology to an otherworldly, personal immortality; thus, mission is simply evangelism with no concern for this world. The New Testament rejects both understandings." (Becoming a Missionary Church)