

The Macedonian Call

Key verses: Acts 16:9-10

Theme: As we seek to do the will of God, God will place a burden on our hearts for the Great Commission. God uses His Word, His Holy Spirit, circumstances and people to move us to reach people more effectively as we prepare the transition from current location to future permanent building of our own.

Acts 16:9-10 During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Introduction:

- The Macedonian call is a call to a particular geographic area – not Asia, not Bithynia, and not Troas.
- The Macedonian call is not a call that every believer experiences. This call came to Paul and Silas when they were already involved in the work. **The call comes to people willing to move where God leads** (Acts 16: 9-10)

I. Turn on your VISION and PASSION for the world:

Lottie Moon is an example of VISION, PASSION, COMMITMENT AND LOVE.

Macedonia. Ac 18:5 (When **Silas and Timothy** came from Macedonia, Paul devoted himself exclusively to preaching, testifying to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ.); 19:21 (**Timothy and Erastus**, Paul's two helpers); 2Co 7:5 (For when we came into Macedonia, this body of ours had no rest, but we were harassed at every turn – conflicts on the outside, fears within.);

There is blessing for obedience.

Ro 15:26 (For Macedonia and Achaia were pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the saints in Jerusalem.); 2Co 8:1-2 (the grace God has given the Macedonian churches – out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity.); 11:9 (the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied what I – Paul - needed);

Principle: God continues to polish the vision to those who obey and are involved in the missionary vision.

II. Three characteristics of Christ's disciples

Luke 9:57-62 *The Cost of Following Jesus*

Count the cost ⁵⁷As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."

Lottie Moon committed wholeheartedly. She has abandoned any other ambitions. Likewise, we must not worry about how much do we have here and now in this life on earth. Rather, let us look up heavenward since this life on earth is but a journey.

Leave it behind - ⁵⁹He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

We must yield to God **now, not later**. Personal experience through skating, first time after a long time, when I brought my whole family to Skateland on Saturday (yesterday), and I fixed my eyes on my feet for the first ten fifteen minutes until my son William was telling me to look ahead of you in distance. To do God's work, we must fix our eyes upon Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Don't look back ⁶¹Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good bye to my family." ⁶²Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

This person has too much attachment to the earth. Though for a short time, it was likely to become the means of stifling (cool down) the good desires he now felt.

As a person who holds the plough cannot keep on a straight furrow if he look behind him; so he who is employed in the work of the ministry cannot do the work of an evangelist, if he turn his desires to worldly profits. A good man has said: "He who thinks it necessary to cultivate the favor of the world is not far from betraying the interests of God and his Church." Such a person is not fit, or properly disposed, has not his mind properly directed towards the heavenly inheritance, and is not fit to show the way to others.

III. Target Evangelism — A model of ministry

Luke 10 *Jesus Sends Out the Seventy-two* ¹After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them **two by two** ahead of him to every town and place **where he was about to go.** ²He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. ³Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. ⁴**Do not take a purse or bag or sandals; and do not greet anyone on the road.** ⁵"When you enter a house, first say, 'Peace to this house.' ⁶If a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; if not, it will return to you. ⁷Stay in that house, **eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.** ⁸"When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. ⁹Heal the sick who are there and tell them, 'The kingdom of God is near you.'

The Macedonian call comes to people whom God chooses to bless

— A relationship with **support base** – Goal: by June 30, 2005, all members will get connected and stay connected with each other and those around us through Bible study and outreach. Remember, you can each reach out to some whom I cannot reach or as effective.

— A **prayer base** – committed prayer warriors: consistently spend significant amount of time searching holiness of living with focus on personal relationship with God, and interceding for the saints and ministries.

— A **love base** – for nearly three years before I joined this church in June 1996, you had fed me with wonderful Friday night food and stay connected with us. Numerous fellowship times with Ivy and Ngee Cheng, and Yaohui and Connie, etc. long before we transferred membership.

— An **offering base** – offer our time, talents and treasure – engage our lives together. Lottie Moon mediated conflicts. She supported her sister and battled loneliness. Unfortunately, some times we allowed little differences to come in our way of relationship with people, and even with our own brothers and sisters in Christ. Differences causing rifts, conflicts in relationship, sometimes even to a point of hatred. Satan will make little disagreements amplified, causing our lives to disengage with each other, disconnected, yet when the Bible was so clear that we must love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us (Matt 6:44).

Mat. 5:23-24 "So if you are standing before the altar in the Temple, offering a sacrifice to God, and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there beside the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. We should take the initiative and go to them when we are the offender...Go in *humility*, not making excuses, simply saying you are sorry and asking to be forgiven. Before we go to God, we need to go to each other and get right with them. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God."

Sometimes we can learn from kids about this: Joshua Long and Micah Cheng love and hate at times of sharing joy and times of conflicts. Yet after all of these struggles, they are still the best buddies there is to each other!

— An eternal reward I wish to challenge you to be burdened to reach out to the unsaved; and reach in to care for our own brothers and sisters whose lives may be enriched by doing life together in our Sunday school classes. The benefit of weekly attendance to Sunday Bible classes is so great. While Christians are more likely than non-Christians to engage in spiritual

practices, the room for growth during Sunday school class cannot be replaced by other means among persons whose beliefs categorize them as born again Christians.

Is my plan to come join with the other brothers and sisters as living witnesses to the dozens of people who need Christ every Friday night? Do I see the value in fellowshiping with my spiritual family? Can I be used by God to help at least one of the over 100 spiritually lost or backslidden people on Friday nights in the last six months? Do I remember why do we have Friday night fellowship as a church of God? Has it been or remained the top priority in my life, over my career (God-given), my children (God-given), my hobby (for God's pleasure or mine?), my friends (worldly ones or the ones we find comfort in Christ?)...? Is my concern about what I can get out of the night or is my concern what blessing the people would have missed had I had not been there?

The four vital habits that everyone needs to grow spiritually: the habit of weekly worship, Sunday Bible class attendance, a daily quiet time, and/or a weekly group Bible study or outreach team mission.

Conclusion:

AS a family, no one gets left behind. Where we move to, let us make sure that all will be there together. What are all of the things that are or are not here which need to be there in our new facility? What are all of the people that we have in membership and fellowship, who will need to be there in our facility, with which who, as new target evangelism effort, will need to be there.

Invitation:

Wish to grow in relationship with church family or weekly fellowship/relationships development. Turn on your vision and passion about outreach – did not share burden and utilize talents and gifts God has given.

November 28, 2004 Benediction: *Numbers 6:24-26: The Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make his face to shine upon you the Lord lift his countenance upon you, and give you peace.*

Welcome & News

The Week of Prayer – Nov 28 to Dec 5, 2004

Thanksgiving Morning Service November 25, 2004 Isaiah 46:3-4 Our friendship and relationship have been tested by fire. As our friendship deepen and long-lasting, we will grow to appreciate each other more since we have shared the grief.

What a joy to share a time of during **Thanksgiving and Appreciation** Dinner November 26, 2004

Ministry Mobilization planning on November 20, 2004

Ray Greene health update: I had his checkup with his orthopedist. His re-hab and general healing during these first two weeks seemed to be reasonably satisfactory. He has been wearing a sling day and night, cannot drive yet, and have a new rehab routine beginning two weeks before. The most pain he had is in his lower right arm and his right eye needed a good check up by eye doctor since the main lick from the tree was on the right side of his head, the side with the detached retina operation, etc.

Please continue to pray for **Lilis' dad**. He's not doing well. He was admitted to the hospital several weeks before because his hemoglobin level (blood count) is very low. He was staying at the hospital overnight and then her family in Wisconsin were in the process of getting in-home care (hopefully with hospice). Things family have already made plans to be in Wisconsin from Dec. 3-12 to be with her dad and the rest of the family for an early Christmas holiday. Please pray for good, clear weather (no snow or sleet) as they drive the 14-hour trip up north.

