

I. Week 15, Strategic Local Church Missions Part 1

A. Missionary Profile – Lottie Moon

- i. Charlotte Diggs Moon (a.k.a. Lottie Moon) was born on December 12th, 1840 in Albemarle County, Virginia.
- ii. She grew up in a family that was part of the elite aristocracy of Virginia.
- iii. She was known to be very bright and became one of the most highly educated southern women of her time.
- iv. After spending many years kicking against Christianity, she was converted at a prayer meeting in 1858 and was baptized at 1st Baptist Church in Charlottesville, VA.
- v. As a believer she was reared on the preaching of the great Baptist preacher and southern seminary professor, John Broadus, and fell in love with one of the brightest young Southern Baptist Scholars of that time, Crawford Toy.
- vi. Lottie Moon and Crawford Toy intended to marry and go to the mission field together, but in 1861, the year Lottie graduated as the first woman in the south to receive her master's degree, the Civil War began.
- vii. As a result, both Lottie's marriage to Crawford Toy, and their commissioning to the mission field were put on hold. When the war was over, Lottie's family, along with most of the Virginian aristocracy, saw their position and fortune largely destroyed, so Lottie took up teaching in various southern schools.
- viii. In 1872, Lottie's sister was sent out as a missionary to Tengchow, China, and Lottie followed her there the next year at the age of 32.
- ix. A few years later she returned with the intention of marrying Crawford Toy and returning with him to the mission field, but when she discovered that he had become deeply compromised by higher critical theology, for which he was later compelled to resign from his professorship at Southern Seminary, she broke off the engagement and returned to China on her own.
- x. Lottie served as a missionary in China's Shantung province for the next 39 years, sharing the gospel mostly to women and girls as she taught in rural girl's schools throughout the province.
- xi. Over time she adopted Chinese language, dress, and customs so that she might identify with the Chinese people she was attempting to reach with the gospel.
- xii. Lottie's time in China was not without severe struggles, such as disease, rejection by the Chinese people, lack of fellow-workers to help, physical privation, and disease, but she refused to leave and persevered in the ministry.
- xiii. Lottie put her considerable intellectual powers to work both in helping to establish southern Baptist missions in China and also challenging her denomination back home to greater participation in missions to China through financial support and sending missionaries.
- xiv. One of her most important legacies is the now famous annual Lottie Moon Christmas offering for International Missions among Southern Baptists, which has raised a total of \$1.5 billion for missions since 1888, and finances half the entire Southern Baptist missions budget every year.
- xv. In the wake of the Boxer Rebellion and the Chinese Nationalist uprising the Chinese people suffered severe hardship, including famine. At the same time

- the Southern Baptist International Mission Board was heavily in debt and had to reduce missionary salaries.
- xvi. During this period Lottie used much of her personal salary to provide for the needs of those around her, until eventually she became severely malnourished and began to lose her mental capacities. In 1912 her fellow missionaries sent her home to recover but she died on Christmas Eve in a harbor in Kobe Japan. Her body was cremated and her ashes were brought back to the United States in a box to be buried in 1913.
 - xvii. Lottie Moon's life is an example to us of the need for the church to be willing to send its best and brightest people to the mission field, and for those people to be willing to sacrifice the life they could enjoy in their homeland to go. Her passionate and persistent attempts to exhort the church to support global missions with workers and money should also still ring in our hearts today.

B. Introduction

- i. Last section of the class – practical missions methodology – how do we do the task of missions.
- ii. Evangelism and discipleship (Jeremy)
- iii. Church planting (Ben)
- iv. Practical challenges of being a missionary (Dave).
- v. Today we are going to discuss practical strategies for local churches to send missionaries

C. Having a sending mindset

- i. Every local church must *think* of themselves as the entity that God has chosen to send out missionaries
 - a. Instruction - the Great Commission was given to the church manifested in local churches
 - b. Example – local churches sent missionaries in the book of Acts.
- ii. Local churches must *think* of parachurch organizations (Bible colleges, Seminaries, Missions Agencies, Evangelistic Organizations like Cru or IV) as existing to support them in fulfilling the GC NOT the other way around.
- iii. Local churches must not become inward focused but outward focused
 - a. They must think of their ministries as not simply existing to serve their members, but rather to equip their members to fulfill the great commission
 - b. They are not the destination spot where everyone comes to get spiritual goods and services (consumer model) but the staging ground for people to be equipped and sent out to fulfill the great commission.
- iv. A church must think of everything they do in terms of how it contributes to the goal of fulfilling the great commission

- v. Paul Seger – President of Biblical Missions Worldwide – seven items integral to being a missions-minded church
 - a. *They must have a clear understanding of the mission*
 - b. *They must have thought through a strategy for fulfilling the mission*
 - c. *The leaders must understand and support the mission and strategy*
 - d. *They must regularly evaluate how things are going in these things*
 - e. *They must have a mindset of training people for the mission.*
 - f. *They must have a passion to recruit people for the mission.*
 - g. *They must be willing to release people to fulfill the mission without too many hindrances.*

D. Who should local churches send as missionaries

- i. If local churches are the sending entities, then the people being sent as missionaries are members of local churches – see Acts 13:1 – NOT Bible colleges or seminaries.
- ii. In the NT the people who were sent out by local churches were mature believers, proven in ministry, and often leaders – Acts 13:2 – also Timothy, Titus, Epaphroditus, etc.
- iii. In the NT those sent out by local churches as missionaries were not simply volunteers but hand-picked – Acts 16:1-3 – although they must have a subjective desire/willingness too!
- iv. Wisdom says that those selected by local churches to go as missionaries should be qualified to do what they will be doing on the field
 - a. **Church planters** should be elder-qualified men who are an elder in their local church
 - b. **Members of missionary teams** should have already be experienced and effective in doing here what they are being sent to do there (evangelism, discipleship, leadership, administration, etc.).
 - c. A priority should be placed, not just on gifts, abilities, education, and training, but also on **character qualities** which will be vital on the mission field
 - 1. faithfulness (in whatever is entrusted to them)
 - 2. humility
 - 3. ability to relate well with people
 - 4. adaptability (i.e. ‘Do you really need ice in your drink? Do you insist on knowing what you are eating? Do you really need a knife and a fork? DO you refuse food because it makes you sick? DO you only eat what tastes good to you?).

- d. **Other things** to consider are such things as
 - 1. physical health – illness or disease could be prohibitive.
 - 2. family dynamics – both husband *and wife* will be missionaries
 - 3. professional skills and experience – they might have to get a job to gain access
 - 4. Idiosyncrasies and eccentricities – ‘As the church identifies potential missionaries, don’t be put off by oddities in people. Those may be the very things that qualify them to succeed in an international ministry” (Paul Seger)
- e. The process of identifying missionaries to be sent out should be done prayerfully – Acts 13:2

E. How should local churches send missionaries

- i. *Supporting and sending are both valid*
- ii. *Before supporting a missionary sent out by someone else consider these things (Paul Seger):*
 - a. Is the missionary in harmony with your doctrinal position?
 - b. Does he/she have the character qualifications to do what they are being sent to do? (i.e. elder qualified)
 - c. Does he/she have the skills and experience to do what he/she is going to do on the field?
 - d. Is this missionary with an agency that you know and approve?
 - e. Is the mission agency in harmony with your doctrinal position?
 - f. If you take on a substantial portion of support, will this person commit to spending time with you during his/her furlough?
 - g. Is his/her ministry going to somehow lead to reproducing your church in the field?
 - h. What is the missionaries home like (if a husband)?
 - i. What is the person’s philosophy of ministry?
- iii. *Sending missionaries requires a strategy to do that*
 - a. This must begin with the leadership having a passion for missions which gets communicated to the church
 - b. It also requires the leadership having the goal of sending missionaries out which is communicated to the church
 - c. Finally it requires the leadership developing and implementing a plan for training and sending qualified members as missionaries from their church
- iv. *The basic elements of a plan for sending out missionaries – 3 Main things*
 - a. The local church must teach potential missionaries what the body of **sound doctrine** in the Scriptures regarding basic Christian faith and practice such that they can impart it to others – 2 Tim 2:2

- b. The local church must help potential missionaries grow spiritually so that they are demonstrating adequate ***Christ-like character*** – Titus 2:1- 14
- c. The local church must train potential missionaries to ‘do’ ***practical ministry*** in their local church – how to evangelize, disciple new believers, study the Scriptures, counsel believers struggling with spiritual problems, teach a class, preach a sermon, organize, resolve conflicts with others, manage ministry finances
 - 1. What training they cannot provide in their local church they should make sure is provided by a trusted and qualified source.
 - 2. Leaders must train leaders
- d. More specific steps – i.e. BMW’s process
 - 1. *Education* – college, seminary, church-based
 - 2. *Experience* – in the local church doing what you would be doing on the field
 - 3. *Application* – if your home church endorses you, apply to be sent through a missions agency
 - 4. *Candidate orientation* – designed to help you get to know the agency
 - 5. *Deputation* – raising funds and getting further training for specific skills you will need on the field
 - 6. *Training* – additional training to prepare you for the field you are going to
 - 7. *Departure* – traveling to the field
 - 8. *Language learning* – a full year devoted entirely to learning the language with ongoing part-time training after that
 - 9. *Cultural adaptation* – going through the stages of culture shock also in your first year.
 - 10. *Launch* – begin actively pursuing the ministry you were sent to carry out.

F. Missions agencies, yes or no?

- i. Yes – there are lots of things that go into sending a missionary in the modern world which require expertise and resources that most local churches don’t have
 - a. Access to fields
 - b. Cultural training
 - c. Insurance
 - d. Legal issues
 - e. Visas and travel
 - f. Communication and representation with foreign governments
 - g. Handling crises
 - h. Certain types of evaluation and accountability

- ii. BUT - Missions agencies should not replace but service local churches in sending missionaries

G. Short term trips, yes or no?

- i. Yes – for a couple of main reasons
 - a. STM is perhaps the single best way to encourage members of your local church to consider becoming a missionary
 - b. STM helps local churches better understand and thus better support their missionaries.
- ii. BUT – STM can become a waste and so must be done wisely.