



**Missions: Part 2**

**MISSIONS**

Rev. Douglas J. Kortyna

**MISSIONS**

Week Two: Local Mission



## Missions: Part 2

### INTRODUCTION

- How do we view our monetary gifts to our local missions? Through reciprocity! If there are not social bonds being created, can we truly say it's a partnership?



*Continued...*

### INTRODUCTION

- What I plan to do is tease out the idea of gift giving in it's local context.



*Continued...*



## Missions: Part 2

### INTRODUCTION

- Perhaps the idea of giving as altruism (disinterested) in the local church needs to be questioned or perhaps exorcised?



### LOCAL MISSIONS

### STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE



- I think local churches need to evaluate, critically, the gifts (graces) that God has given to them. What do they exceed at doing for the Lord?

Continued...



## Missions: Part 2



### STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

- Negative Example: I would not be able to teach piano as a means of outreach to generate social bonds. I cannot even play the piano! But how often do church consulting groups not ask about what are the churches' specific gifts that the Lord has given to their people?

*Continued...*



### STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

- Positive Example: Sara and I have the ability, through the Lord's grace, to connect with immigrants. Therefore, it would make sense to start an English club or ESL outreach as local mission of our church.



## Missions: Part 2



### LOCAL MISSION AND SECULARIZED MISSIONS

- Goodwill Industries was started by the Methodists.

*Continued...*



### LOCAL MISSION AND SECULARIZED MISSIONS

- Hospitals were started by the deacons in Calvin's Geneva. They were the proto hospitals. It's interesting that Christian medical missionaries have had great success in Africa.

*Continued...*





## Missions: Part 2



### LOCAL MISSION AND SECULARIZED MISSIONS



- Christians started Yale, Princeton, Harvard, as a means of local missions. Other elite private high schools were local missions founded by Christians, too.

### HIGH, LOW, AND MEDIUM CHURCH

- America, traditionally, has been defined by a low church mentality with regards to mission. This is both good and bad.



*Continued...*



## Missions: Part 2

### HIGH, LOW, AND MEDIUM CHURCH

- The good: the “free market” mentality allows for many parachurch organizations to reach people that the church sometimes cannot. For example, at the General Assembly, we heard testimony from a women who reaches out to strippers.

*Continued...*



### HIGH, LOW, AND MEDIUM CHURCH

- The bad: the low church tradition downplays the importance of church. In reality, outreach ministry replaces the church. The long term goal should be to get people into the pews.

*Continued...*





## Missions: Part 2

### HIGH, LOW, AND MEDIUM CHURCH

- The future—perhaps a “via media”—can be reached. The local church supports missions that reach out to people the church doesn’t have the time to invest in. But, ministries partner with churches having the goal of pushing people towards membership in the local church.



IX

Mar – Apr 2011

### 9Marks Journal

Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches

**friends or foes?**  
church and parachurch



### PARACHURCH

- Local missions are more or less all parachurches. Unless they are under the ecclesiastical authority of the church.

Continued...





## Missions: Part 2

IX

Mar - Apr 2011

### 9Marks Journal

Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches

**friends or foes?**  
church and parachurch



## PARACHURCH

- Perhaps a mutual relationship of accountability can be struck. Parachurches keep churches accountable for their lack of evangelism, for example. But, churches keep parachurches in check with their tendency to define what they are doing as “the church.”

*Continued...*

IX

Mar - Apr 2011

### 9Marks Journal

Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches

**friends or foes?**  
church and parachurch



## PARACHURCH

- When both work together through mutual bonds and friendship, success can be reached!



## Missions: Part 2

### BAD EXPERIENCE: *HUMAN COALITION*

- Sara and I were invited to a banquet for a ministry that tries to persuade women with an unplanned pregnancy to choose life.



*Continued...*

### BAD EXPERIENCE: *HUMAN COALITION*

- However, the ministry banquet quickly turned from a grassroots ministry that was doing wonderful work to a political rally for the Republican party.



*Continued...*



## Missions: Part 2

### BAD EXPERIENCE: *HUMAN COALITION*

- The CEO Brian Fisher of the newly branded *Human Coalition* “bought out” all of the grass-roots pregnancy centers throughout the country. The result? He essentially created a lobbying movement and the parachurch lost its vision for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

*Continued...*



### BAD EXPERIENCE: *HUMAN COALITION*

- Our home church pulled funding from the crisis pregnancy center in Pittsburgh.





## Missions: Part 2

### GOOD EXPERIENCE: *PRISM*



- *PRISM* ministers to primarily graduate students in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh.

Continued...

### GOOD EXPERIENCE: *PRISM*



- They intentionally push new Christians into an ethnic church (Chinese Evangelical church, for example), or another church. Bellefield EPC in Oakland for example has tons of *PRISM* students.

Continued...





## Missions: Part 2

### GOOD EXPERIENCE: PRISM



- We heard many testimonies throughout the banquet of those who came to faith. Moreover, they asked those attending to get involved. They encourage reciprocal gift giving!

### CRACKS IN THE WELFARE STATE

- Christian social scientists are noticing cracks in the social welfare state. In the future, perhaps Christians will be able to give more aid and more assistance to the poor.

*Continued...*

## THE DIDACHE



The Original Greek Text  
with  
Four English Translations

## Missions: Part 2

### CRACKS IN THE WELFARE STATE

- It is very hard for the church to compete with the state or non-governmental agencies. We simply do not have the money.

Continued...

### THE DIDACHE



The Original Greek Text  
with  
Four English Translations

### CRACKS IN THE WELFARE STATE

- Even early Christians were stretched with money. *The Didache* (early Christian writing) exhorts Christians to help the poor. However, you know someone is a false teacher if they stay over three nights (according to *The Didache*)!

### THE DIDACHE



The Original Greek Text  
with  
Four English Translations



## Missions: Part 2



### LOCAL MISSIONARIES

- How do we create closer social bonds with our local missionaries?

*Continued...*



### LOCAL MISSIONARIES

- Example: Gary Koerth coming to preach for RPC and have lunch with the members of the Missions Committee.

*Continued...*



## Missions: Part 2



### LOCAL MISSIONARIES

- RPC has done this in the past with our lunches with CCO and CRU.

### PICK ONE OR TWO MISSIONS

- Churches often suffer from picking multiple missions. There are plenty of good causes out there. The church should just pick one or two and do them well.

*Continued...*





## **Missions: Part 2**

### **PICK ONE OR TWO MISSIONS**

- Realize we are not the Lord. Our calling is to be faithful and not to “save the world,” or “make the world a better place.” Christians should trust the Lord will do His work.

*Continued...*

### **PICK ONE OR TWO MISSIONS**

- Try to get involved with local missions. If they are through the church (Session plans to have this in the future!), or parachurch organizations. When you give them money, try to get involved.



## Missions: Part 2



### GRASS ROOTS MINISTRY

- I think we should always ask the question: “How will this work from a grass roots perspective?”

Continued...



### GRASS ROOTS MINISTRY

- We should think about local mission in concrete concepts and not in abstract terms. I think this is why *PRISM* excelled and *The Human Coalition* did not.

Continued...



## Missions: Part 2



### GRASS ROOTS MINISTRY

- Do not over extend yourself. We are not called to save the world. That is the Lord's job.

*Continued...*



### GRASS ROOTS MINISTRY

- We can serve our neighborhoods with parachurches that are not officially endorsed by RPC.



## Missions: Part 2

### CURRENT TRENDS IN THE EPC

- Many of my Teaching Elder friends are rethinking how local mission work is done. They might not argue through the lens of gift giving and reciprocity (like I do). But, we end up with the same conclusions.



*Continued...*

### CURRENT TRENDS IN THE EPC

- I also see a push to “run lean.” If the goal is reciprocity and social bonding through mutual exchange of gifts, then “less is more.”



*Continued...*





## Missions: Part 2

### CURRENT TRENDS IN THE EPC

- I personally get fired up when thinking about the friendships, partnerships, and many other possibilities that could happen when we frame local mission in a gift giving context.

