

“MISSION”?

River of Life International Christian Fellowship
PASTOR’S PEN - April 21, 2012

What comes to mind when you think of “MISSIONS”? Is it going out to the far places of the world and telling “unreached” peoples about the Gospel?

You are absolutely right. And yet, missions is NOT simply spreading the gospel to far, far places. IT IS FIRST AND FOREMOST ABOUT THE PEOPLE. Missions is about loving people, all people, near and far. Missions is about having COMPASSION. It is like Jesus looking at the people in Jerusalem and crying for them, because they are a sheep without a shepherd. We can tell others about Jesus all we want, and yet they will reject their salvation, if we do not first show compassion.... We can also just shrug our shoulders and not care about others, when we do not have compassion.

COMPASSION means “to suffer together with”, and having an intense desire to help lighten the burden and suffering of others. It means to understand and sympathize with another person, and gently offering support, a shoulder to cry on, a listening ear, or whatever is needed.

COMPASSION is what drives missions. It is what makes missionaries stay in their adoptive countries, long after they exhausted all efforts. It is what makes them pray all night, and love others through persecution, trials and death. How can they do that? Because effective missionaries have themselves received compassion from the God of all comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)!

But then again, you don’t have to go to far, unreached places to show compassion, or to become a missionary. Do you have compassion for your neighbors or those who call you enemy? Do you feel for the young people, children, singles or families? Do you have compassion for the less fortunate, the widows, orphans and elderlies, for the brokenhearted, or the prisoners in our community? THEN YOU ARE A MISSIONARY and you CAN do the work that Jesus told us to do when He said “be my witnesses... to the ends of the earth”.

This weekend, all around the world Christians celebrate COMPASSION SUNDAY. It’s a national event that draws the attention of the Church to the needs of the world’s poorest children. We can all do our part. Start by praying for compassion like Jesus has. And be ready for God to open your heart to those who are in need, wherever they may be.

Next weekend, the History Makers will have a 30-hour Famine, so that our teens will develop compassion for the hungry and poor, whether they are in Africa or in their neighborhood. Join us, and please continue to pray that true compassion may arise in our generation.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 “Give praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He is the Father who gives tender love. All comfort comes from him. He comforts us in all our troubles. Now we can comfort others when they are in trouble. We ourselves have received comfort from God.”

To the praise of His glorious grace,
Pastor Mike and Grace Ibay

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