This is lecture 13— The Missionary Explosion of the Nineteenth Century. Greetings once again in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and let me invite you to join me in prayer as we begin. Let us pray. Good and gracious God, we ask that you would open us once again today to that which you have to teach us. Guide us by your Spirit. For we pray this in Christ’s name. Amen.

Kenneth Scott Latourette has called the nineteenth century the Great Century, in large measure because of its deep and pervasive commitment to the Christian mission around the world. In the Great Commission, Matthew 28:16–20, Christ commanded His disciples to “go into all the world and make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the age.” Faithful Christians have responded to this call in every age of the church, yet no period is so dominantly marked by Christian outreach as was the nineteenth century.

The story begins much earlier, traced across the centuries from Pentecost to the present, in the spreading flame during the Roman era, soon after the founding of the church, the evangelization of Europe during the Middle Ages, the encounters with Islam, the strategies of the Crusades, and many other instances as well. The story is told in much more detail in such books as Steven Neill’s A History of Christian Missions, Penguin Books, 1964, or Herbert Kane’s A Concise History of the Christian World Mission, Baker Books, 1987, or a variety or writings of Kenneth Scott Latourette. His History of the Expansion of Christianity, a seven-volume set, focuses largely on the expansion of Christianity across the centuries.

In our own text for this course, you might want to refer specifically to a variety of passages in Latourette. You’ll find more help in Latourette on this subject than any other within his book. Pages
923 to 994 cover the period of missionary expansion following the Reformation. Pages 1063 to 1225 focus specifically on this Great Century, the nineteenth century that we’re talking about in this lecture. You’ll find pages 1409 to 1453 focusing on developments after 1914, and there’s a whole additional section which Ralph Winter has added to this particular edition of that text on the World Christian Movement, 1950 to 1975. This is on pages 1477 to 1514, concluding the book.

A whole variety of other sources are available as well—Oliver Elsbree’s *The Rise of the Missionary Spirit in America*, Williamsport Printing Company, 1928, or Colin Goodykoontz’s *Home Missions on the American Frontier*, Caxton, 1939, or Pierce Beaver’s *All Loves Excelling*, Eerdmans, 1968, and many others. These are available for us for our study of this magnificent story of missionary outreach.

Today I want to focus primarily upon the nineteenth and into the twentieth century. This is a period of enormous mission activity, and we begin the story with a continental Pietist. You’ll recall those from our earlier discussions. Philipp Jacob Spener, a Lutheran pastor in Strasbourg, later in Frankfurt, sought to raise the spiritual level of his flock through development of vital piety, and you may recall in his writings his emphasis on conversion, upon Bible study, prayer group prayer meetings, concern for the needy, and the like. These folks experienced great persecution, and when the University of Saxony closed its doors to the Pietists, they opened their own university at Halle in Germany in 1694, and for ten years Spener helped to build the school.

Following his death in 1705, August Francke took over the leadership of this growing university center. Halle not only became the educational center of Pietism, but it also became the fountainhead of the modern missionary movement in the eighteenth century. As one of my former teachers at Princeton commented, this is James Hastings Nichols, “The university was surrounded with other institutions, a pauper school, a boys’ boarding school, an orphanage, a Latin school, and over six thousand Pietist clergy were trained by the Halle Theological faculty, which was the largest divinity school in Germany.”

Out of Halle grew the first Protestant mission, what is called the Danish Halle Mission. In 1620, Denmark established its first trading colony at Tranquebar on the east coast of India. From the beginning, they set out chaplains to minister to the spiritual needs of these colonists. In 1705 Dr. Franz Lutkens,
court chaplain at Copenhagen, was commissioned by Frederick IV to recruit missionaries to the indigenous populations of those areas that were being settled. Lutkens turned to the University of Halle to find recruits. Two names were suggested: Bartholomew Ziegenbalg and Heinrich Plutschau. These were both students of August Francke. They both volunteered and sailed for Tranquebar on November 29, 1705.

There was great opposition from members of the Lutheran Church. The faculty of theology at Wittenberg called them false prophets. Why the opposition? Some Lutheran theologians were teaching that the Great Commission pertained only to the original apostles and they had fulfilled it. The church today, therefore, has neither the authority nor the responsibility, many of them felt, to send missionaries to the ends of the earth. An ambivalent attitude toward mission by Magisterial Reformers is one of those ongoing questions that is continually studied and debated today. Be that as it may, Plutschau lasted only five years. Ziegenbalg, however, remained in India for fifteen years and through his writings and speaking gained enormous interest and following for the mission throughout Europe.

The origins of the Moravian Church go back to 1467, when the persecuted followers of John Huss joined with some Waldensians to form the Unitas Fratrum of the United Brethren. Migrating to Saxony in 1722, they were given refuge and land on one of the estates of Count Zinzendorf, this one near Dresden. This became known as Herrnhut, the Lord’s Watch, and it became the center of an enormous missionary outreach. Nicholas Ludwig Zinzendorf, 1700–1760, decided as a young man to devote all of his time and treasure to the cause of Christ. He became a bishop of the Moravian Church in 1737, and for thirty years he guided its worldwide missionary outreach.

He and Francke were without doubt the greatest missionary leaders of the eighteenth century. Zinzendorf was visiting Copenhagen in 1730 when his interest in missions was first triggered. He met a black man from the West Indies and two Eskimos from Greenland. All three of them pleaded with him to send missionaries to help them. He was deeply moved by their need, and when he returned to Herrnhut, he placed the challenge before his brothers and sisters there. Their response was immediate and enthusiastic. The first mission set out to the black slaves on the Danish island of Saint Thomas in the Virgin Islands. They went there in 1732. The following year they went to Greenland. One year later, they
were in Saint Croix in the Virgin Islands. Then came Suriname in 1735 and the Gold Coast of Africa and down in South Africa in 1737, and to the North American Indians in 1740 and to Jamaica in 1754 and to Antigua in 1756.

All told, between 1732 and 1768, 226 Moravian missionaries went to ten foreign countries. That’s really remarkable. As Charles Robinson commented in his *History of Christian Missions*, 1915, “Within twenty years of the commencement of their missionary work, the Moravian brethren had started more missions than the Anglicans and Protestants had started during the preceding two centuries combined.” Their marvelous success was largely due to the fact that from the first they recognized that the evangelization of the world was the most pressing of obligations, and that the carrying out of the obligation was the common affair of everyone in the community. Their work prospered. It’s interesting to note that the Moravian missionaries had very little formal and almost no theological training. This was in sharp contrast to the Halle missionaries, almost all of whom were well-educated, and I think it’s important to note that God seemed to bless the ministries of both—the educated and the uneducated. The first two missionaries to Greenland were gravediggers. To the West Indies went carpenters and potters. God uses all sorts and kinds and gifts and interests.

Today Moravian missions continue to flourish, with four major centers in West Germany, England, Denmark, and the US. During the eighteenth century, missions were dominated by the Danish Halle Mission on the one hand and these marvelous Moravian missions on the other. During the next hundred years, throughout the nineteenth century, sixteen new missions were added—the Netherlands Missionary Society in 1797, in Germany, the Berlin Missionary Society in 1824, the Rhenish Missionary Society in 1828, the Gossner Mission in 1836, the Leipzig Mission Society in 1836, the Hermansburg Mission in 1849. In Scandinavia, six new societies were started; in France, the Paris Evangelical Missionary Society in 1822, followed by others. In Switzerland, the Basel Evangelical Mission Society in 1815, and the list could go on and on. Virtually all of these are still functioning. Some thirteen hundred German missionaries are working today throughout the world.

Missions tended, having started in Europe, to move to the west, to the British Isles and eventually we’ll see to the Americas, and now today, pretty largely, into the two-thirds world or the Third World
as it’s often called. That’s the pattern that we’re going to see now over the next century or century and a half.

We turn now from Europe to the British Isles and to the growth of the great British Mission. The missionary movement in the British Isles is rooted in the Evangelical Awakening, which took place under Wesley and Whitefield in the eighteenth century. Three missions societies were established as a result, all designed originally to spread the gospel in North America. The first was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England, established in 1649. The focus was upon Native Americans. This was an Indian mission. The first missionary was John Elliott, whose name should be a familiar one to all of us. The second mission was the SPCK, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in 1698. This was basically rooted in the Anglican Church. The leading figure in its formation was Thomas Bray, a rector in Maryland under the bishop of London. The focus was the white colonists of the New World. Its strategy was dissemination of Christian literature to lay people and to clergy. They wanted to strengthen the libraries; they wanted to reach out largely through the printed page. Today the SPCK has bookstores virtually all over the world. Most of its focus is still Anglican, but its constituency tends to draw in folk from other traditions as well.

The third of the early missions was the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the SPG, founded in 1701. Its focus was dual: upon ministers who needed to minister to the spiritual needs of the English settlers overseas and evangelization of Native Americans, the Indian peoples here.

The major figure in British missions is the great William Carey. He’s often called the father of modern missions, I think, with just cause. What Luther was to the Protestant Reformation, in many ways Carey was to the Christian missionary movement. The story really begins with Robert Miller, his 1723 volume, *A History of the Propagation of Christianity and the Overthrow of Paganism*. They loved those long titles in earlier years. He advocated intercessory prayer as the primary means for converting the unconverted. This led to prayer groups all over the British Isles, and the focus of their prayer was the conversion of the world.

In 1746, British Christians sent a request to Boston Christians to enter in with them to a seven-year concert of prayer for worldwide missions. Jonathan Edwards picked up the request here and helped by issuing his own call for that kind of intercessory prayer, and
those concerts of prayer, which are now being revived in our own
day, began to emerge in many corners here in the world. It was
in this context that William Carey rose to prominence. His years
are 1761–1834. He was an apprentice shoemaker at Hackleton.
Converted at the age of eighteen, he joined a Baptist church,
he mended shoes, taught school, and preached on Sundays. He
read voraciously. He taught himself Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Italian,
French, and Dutch. He got very interested in Captain Cook’s book,
_The Last Voyage of Captain Cook_, and his missionary interests
were kindled. He then read Edwards’s _Life and Diary of David
Brainerd_. That has been reproduced in one of the great Edwards’s
series from Yale Press. I think it’s the seventh volume. There’s
enormous power in books, and we need to focus periodically upon
the impact which books have had in changing people’s lives and
redirecting the course of their own ministry and work.

He made up his own map of the world and had it on his wall,
inscribed every bit of information he could find through letters
or through reading. He would mark it down on his map. It’s an
interesting experiment and one that some of us may do well to
try. In 1792, Carey published his little eighty-seven-page book,
_An Inquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for
the Conversion of the Heathen_. That’s perhaps the single most
important missionary tract ever written, and it’s available now in
reprinted form and is fairly easy to get ahold of.

Carey, who was part of a Calvinistic Baptist group, tried to get a
society established to send out missionaries, and at a meeting of
this group in Northamptonshire, Carey proposed a discussion of
the Great Commission and its implications. Dr. John Ryland, who
was there, retorted, “Young man, sit down. When God pleases
to convert the heathen, He’ll do it without you and without
your aid or mine.” Carey remained undaunted. He and others
who shared the vision continued to pray. John Sutcliffe, Andrew
Fuller, Samuel Pearce, and others. On May 30, 1792, at the Baptist
Ministers Association at Nottingham, Carey preached his famous
sermon on Isaiah 54, and it’s in that sermon that he coined the
phrase, “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for
God.” This had a profound impact on many, and by the following
October, they had formed the Particular Baptist Society for
Propagating the Gospel Among the Heathen. Reginald Hogg was
treasurer. Andrew Fuller was secretary. Money was being raised
by individual contributions. There was a tremendous obstacle
to this. Carey’s father considered him mad, and his wife said, “If
he ever went to the mission field, she wouldn’t come.” Later she
recanted, of course.

Carey sailed for India on June 13, 1793, with a reluctant wife, four children, and two companions. Five months later he arrived in India and was there for the next forty years. It’s been my privilege recently to stand in Carey’s pulpit in his church in Calcutta. It’s quite a remarkable thing to see that work from inside, and God made mighty use of Carey throughout that part of the world and by his influence around the world. Carey’s example, in fact, inspired the formation of a whole flurry of new missionary societies. The London Missionary Society in 1795, the Scottish and Glasgow Missionary Societies in 1796, the Netherlands’s Missionary Society in 1797, the Church Missionary Society in 1799, the British and Foreign Bible Society in 1804, the America Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1810, the American Baptist Union in 1814, the American Bible Society in 1816, and so on.

The impetus for the missionary outreach moves now from Europe to the British Isles and finally to America. On this side of the Atlantic, the modern mission story begins really with Samuel Mills. He came from a Connecticut farming family and entered Williams College in Massachusetts in 1806. He was planning to prepare for the ministry. There he was joined by a group of kindred spirits, James Richards, Francis Robbins, Harvey Loomis, Gordon Hall, and Luther Rice. These came to be known as the Society of the Brethren. They met frequently for prayer and discussion. One day in a thunderstorm, they took refuge in a haystack and there prayed for the conversion of the world. They also there resolved to become America’s first foreign missionaries. They signed a pledge to that effect. Thereafter, this group was called the Haystack Group, and American missions really reaches back to that interesting haystack event, which is commemorated on Williams campus as the beginning of the American missionary outreach.

After graduation, many in this group went on to Andover Seminary, which had been founded in 1808, the first of our seminaries of the style that we know now and have become familiar with. It was the center for Christian missionary activity, and there these folk were joined by Adoniram Judson, who had graduated from Brown University, and Samuel Newell, who had graduated from Harvard, and Samuel Knott from Union College, and others. They formed under Judson’s leadership the Society of Inquiry into the Subject of Missions. June 28, 1810, Judson, Mills, Knott, and Newell offered
themselves for missionary service to the General Association of Congregational Ministers of Massachusetts. This led to the establishment of the foreign missions board, the original Board of Commissioners for Foreign Mission, in 1810. These were the simple beginnings of the American missionary movement, which led ultimately to a reality of missionary activity in the world that is marked by 70 percent of all worldwide Protestant missionaries and 80 percent of all finances focused and rooted here in America.

They had close ties also with the London Missionary Society. They chose Burma as the first field, and the original party included eight missionaries—Judson, Newell, Knott, and their wives, Gordon Hall, and Luther Rice. All were graduates of Andover Seminary. All were ordained at the Tabernacle in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1812. February of that year, the Judsons and the Newells set sail from Salem on the Caravan. We can actually visit the dock where they took off. The rest of them left from Philadelphia on the ship Harmony. Four months it took them to get across. Soon other fields were opened as a result of their labors—Ceylon in 1816, the Near East in 1820, China in 1830, Madeira in 1834.

Aboard the ship going over, Judson changed his mind about baptism. He was immersed as an adult. He wrote the Congregationalists at home who were supporting him to resign since he could no longer in good conscience take their money, since he no longer believed in infant baptism. The Baptists, however, picked up his cause, and it led to the formulation of what is now the American Baptist Foreign Missions Board, which began in 1814. Judson became its first and more famous missionary.

Other missionary societies were quickly formed. The Methodist Episcopal Church in 1819, the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1821, the Presbyterian Church in 1831, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in 1837. The 1980 missions handbook lists 714 mission organizations presently in America with a budget of over one billion dollars per year, supporting fifty-three thousand missionaries in nearly two hundred countries. All of that from that simple little haystack prayer meeting out in the western part of Massachusetts. Quite a story.

Latourette gives three of his seven volumes in his larger church history set to the nineteenth century. The focus there is upon the missionary expansion of that century. Never before in the church’s history had there been more concerted, organized, or successful attempts to spread the gospel around the world. By the end of the
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The nineteenth century, every Protestant country was represented on the mission field. This was done through four types of missionary societies, and in the nineteenth century you begin to get the division between strategies for mission. The first, the interdenominational missions, these were the earliest forms, the London Mission Society, the ABCFM, and others. As the movement got momentum, virtually every denominational group started its own missionary society. The third and one of the most interesting was the faith mission movement. It came about in the mid-nineteenth century. Hudson Taylor’s usually seen as the kind of father or leader of this movement. It started in Great Britain and then moved to the US. The first of the faith missions was the BMMF, founded in 1852. Others were added like the China Inland Mission, now the OMF, in 1865, and some two dozen more by 1900.

In America, the very first faith mission was WUMS, the Women’s Union Mission Society, founded in 1860, and then that was followed by the Christian Missionary Alliance in 1887, Team Mission in 1890, Sudan Interior Mission in 1893, African Inland Mission in 1895, and the like. One of the things that interests me most about this is the fact that the oldest British faith mission, the BMMF, combined recently with the oldest American faith mission, Women’s Union Mission Society. My mother-in-law served for many years as the president of the Women’s Union Mission Society, and my father-in-law was the architect who put the two together. So this has special meaning for me in terms of that faith mission development.

The fourth kind of mission were the specialized missions. Later in the nineteenth and early twentieth century, missions started focusing on certain people or areas. Indian missions, Eskimo missions, missions to the deaf, the blind, the military, to children, to lepers, literacy missions, radio missions, aviation, and to relief, and the list could go on. I should also mention the Bible societies—the United Bible Societies made up of sixty-six separate organizations centered now in Stuttgart, Germany, all dedicated to translating, publishing, and distributing Bibles. This has been an enormous help in the world outreach of the church.

The nineteenth century produced many marvelous missionaries as well. The International Biography of Missionary lists 2,286 missionary biographies, focusing on William Carey, Adoniram Judson, Robert Morrison of China, Hudson Taylor of China, William Miller of India, Samuel Brown of Japan, Ludwig Nommensen of Sumatra, Daniel Bliss of Beirut, David Livingston of Africa, Robert
Moffat of Africa, and the list goes on and on. If you’ve not had any occasion to read through missionary biography, you have a great treat in store for you, and let me encourage you to find a good biography and to begin to read it. One good place to begin is Joan Jacobs Brumberg’s *Mission for Life: The Story of the Family of Adoniram Judson*, put out by Macmillan in 1980. It’s an exciting book, and others are available of that sort as well.

What about twentieth-century developments? The course of missions in the twentieth century is marked by development of three different movements: the faith mission movement, which started earlier but now took new root and new impetus; the Bible institute movement; and the student volunteer movement, which ended in the 1930s. The faith mission movement is a fascinating one. The term is applied really to several interdenominational agencies who trust God for their support. There’s no natural constituency. The principles are simply that they do not go into debt, they do not solicit funds, and they have a statement of faith to sign. Most of these are all conservative evangelical statements. They make their needs known and then the trust God to prompt the hearts of people to support them. This is true of Wycliffe Bible Translators with some forty-two hundred missionaries, and Campus Crusade, a staff of some six thousand now in 150 different countries.

The second of these movements is the Bible institute or the Bible college movement started in the 1880s. Now there are nearly three hundred in the United States and Canada. The first of these was in Nyack, New York, in 1882, and then you have Moody in 1886, you have Boston Missionary Training School, now one of the founding schools of Gordon College and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, founded in 1889. Ontario, Columbia Bible College, Multnomah, Prairie Bible, Lancaster, and the list goes on and on. The contribution of these schools to missionary work around the world is incredibly important and almost unknown. Moody Bible Institute has had fifty-eight hundred of its graduates serve under 255 mission boards in 108 different countries. That’s just one school. This means that today one out of every eighteen North American missionaries anywhere in the world is a graduate of Moody. That’s an incredible figure. And even though they probably dominate more than any of the other Bible schools in the missionary enterprise, if you add together all of the Bible institute movement schools, the impact upon missions is almost incalculable. Too little is known of the impact of these schools. There are nearly one hundred schools now in the AABC, which is
the Accrediting Association for Bible Colleges. A total enrollment of nearly forty thousand students, and if you add to these the forty Bible schools in Europe and some thirty Bible schools in the British Isles, the impact is even greater. Look at a school like Spurgeon’s College in London, founded in 1856, and the like.

In addition to the faith Missions movement and the Bible institute movement, we need to add also the student volunteer movement. Started in the 1880s, it was the vision of Robert Wilder and emphasized through the preaching of D. L. Moody and organized by John R. Mott. The summer of 1886, one hundred college seminary and university students met at Mount Herman, Massachusetts, to sign what was called the Princeton Pledge: “I propose, God willing, to become a foreign missionary.” That was the statement, and many signed it. The watchword of the movement given by Wilder was the evangelization of the world in this generation. The last convention was held in Indianapolis in 1936, but for fifty years, it helped to send over twenty thousand student missionaries out to the field. SMF and InterVarsity now carry on this same kind of work.

In recent decades, missionary activity in mainline churches has been on the decline. If you look at the figures comparatively in some of our major denominations, you get the idea of what has happened. Between 1970 and 1980 in the American Baptist Convention, the number of missionaries dropped from 290 to 200. In the Presbyterian Church, 1,201 dropped to 618. The United Methodist—1,175 to 938. In the Protestant Episcopal, 138 to 69. In the UCC, 356 to 160. You see the pattern. The Southern Baptist Convention continues to hold its own. Many conservative evangelical groups are growing, and this has been increased by two new programs which emerged in the 1960s—the short-term missions abroad and summer missionary projects. It’s interesting that according to studies that some 25 percent of short-termers who go out to the field become career missionaries. Now that’s a pretty good number. Most of them who go out, even though they may not become career missionaries, greatly appreciate the experience; in fact, only 3.1 percent tested were at all negative about it, and they carry that positive image and emphasis into their own work here in the States or wherever they live.

We should say a word about missionary radio. Radio has been a major vehicle for spreading the gospel. Stations like HCJB in Quito, Ecuador, which went on the air Christmas Day 1931. They first had a little 250-watt transmitter, and this now has been
expanded to an enormous outreach in many languages. FEBC in Manila started in 1945, now has twenty-eight transmitters, nineteen hundred program hours in ninety-one languages. ELWA in Liberia. HLKY in Korea. KLKK in Korea. RVOG in Ethiopia, and others.

Add to this the impetus of church growth under the work of Donald McGavran and others, Evangelism in Depth, the work of Ken Strachen and others—theological education by extension, Ralph Winter and others, or Urbana missionary conferences, and InterVarsity. All of these have added up to an enormous outreach of missionary work around the world. Today some fifteen thousand non-Caucasian missionaries are serving around the world as well from Korea, Japan, the Philippines, from India, from Africa, and from Latin America. The real growth of missions now seems to be coming from Third World countries. Those other, newer churches around the world are now seeing the vision of the commission of God and going out, some of them right here to America, to bring the gospel.

As we look back upon this great missionary movement, how can we assess it? What did the missionaries do wrong? What did they do that was right? Let me suggest a few things. Areas of failure, which I think we need to admit, some of their emphases depreciated the pagan religions of the countries in which they were serving. Some of them had a superiority complex and carried that with them from the culture here into their work on the field. Some of them failed to make adequate distinction between Christianity and Western culture, and that’s one that’s evoked a great deal of discussion and, in fact, has received a good deal of discussion in the literature. Some of them tended to export denominationalism. Some of them failed to encourage indigenization and development of national leadership. Some of them were paternalistic. Some of them identified too closely with the colonial system. These and other things, I think, are general failures a part of missionary activity. But overall, I think we can say that the much stronger tendency is what those missionaries did right.

I’m deeply impressed by the fact that they felt called of God and went out at enormous personal cost and oftentimes great peril of life. Many of them went loving the people with genuine appreciation for indigence cultures, and in fact in some areas were the real protectors of that culture. Many of them took years to learn the language so that they could communicate. They
translated the Scripture. They saw the potential of national leaders. They opened hospitals and schools. They introduced social and political reforms. They provided water. They cleaned up the atmosphere so that there would be less disease. These and many, many other wonderful contributions these missionaries made to the field, and I have a deep love both for the missionaries and for the calling to worldwide missions.

Many difficulties are faced today in missionary activity—enormously high cost. Inflation is running rampant in many parts of the world, and this is making it difficult to live as missionaries. Nationalism, anti-American sentiments, the inroads of Universalism, growing ethnocentrism—all of these things are creating obstacles for worldwide mission endeavor today. In fact, I think some of the most important issues theologically today that face us are issues that are fundamentally missions concerns and missions issues.

The world population today is some 4.5 billion. Only 1.2 billion of those are Christians. In fact, there's a shrinking Christian population. In 1960, Christians made up 33 percent of the world's population. In 1970, that had shrunk to 30 percent. In 1980, it had shrunk further to 26 percent. Today then, 1.2 billion Christians, 750 million of these are Roman Catholics, 350 million are Protestants, about 100 million of these are Orthodox. There are some 85,000 total career and short-term missionaries today; 53,000 of these come from North America, 13,000 come from Europe, 3,500 from Australia and New Zealand, and well over 15,000 and growing now from the two-thirds world or the Third World countries. There's a great task before us. And the history of missions should not only encourage and spur us on, but it should remind us of that great calling which God gave to His church in the very first century and which has been repeated, picked up, and fulfilled in different ways throughout all of these centuries, and we need to pick that theme up again today.

One of the most powerful statements of this is the Lausanne Covenant. You can find the references to this; in fact, the statement itself in Christianity Today in its August 16, 1974, issue. And if you can't find it easily elsewhere, I would encourage you to dig out that old issue from the library and [photocopy] it and put it up on your desk or hang it up on your refrigerator. I try to read it virtually every month to remind me of the kind of impact and calling which God gives us as joyful ministers of the gospel around the world.
It begins: “We members of the Church of Jesus Christ from more than 150 nations, participants in the International Congress on World Evangelization at Lausanne, praise God for His great salvation and rejoice in the fellowship He has given us with Himself and each other. We are deeply stirred by what God is doing in our day, moved to penitence by our failures, and challenged by the unfinished task of evangelization. We believe the Gospel is God’s good news for the whole world, and we are determined by His grace to obey Christ’s commission to proclaim this Gospel to all, to make disciples of every nation. We desire, therefore, to affirm our faith and resolve and to make public our covenant.” And then it goes on to describe the purpose of God, the authority and power of the Bible, the uniqueness and universality of Christ, the nature of evangelism, the emphasis on Christian social responsibility, the church and evangelism, cooperation and evangelism, churches and evangelistic partnership, the urgency of the task, evangelism and culture, education and leadership, spiritual conflict, freedom in persecution, the power of the Holy Spirit, and ultimately this great conclusion, “Therefore in the light of this, with our faith and our resolve, we enter into a solemn covenant with God and with each other to pray, to plan, and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world. We call upon others to join us. May God help us by His grace and for His glory to be faithful to this our covenant. Amen and Hallelujah.”