

<b>Series:</b> The Missing Half	<b>Reference:</b> <i>Various Scriptures</i>	<b>Title:</b> Four Ways	<b>Date:</b> 05.02.2021
<b>Website Writeup:</b> Today we explore four practical ways we can be involved in impacting the nations for God's glory - being Senders, Welcomers, Mobilizers, or Goers.			

(This material is largely derived from UnveilinGLORY's YouTeach series.)

Today we're finishing up our second of two four week miniseries called the Missing Half. We've been focussing on two parts of God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3 - God's desire to bless Abraham (the top line) and God's desire to have Abraham bless all the nations of the earth (the bottom line), which is carried all throughout Scripture. Our goal today's to explore four practical ways we can be involved in impacting nations for God's glory. They are...being **Senders, Welcomers, Mobilizers, or Go-ers**.

Let's start with becoming an effective **Sender**...the military use the *Tooth to Tail Ratio*. It's the number of military personnel (the 'tail') it takes to meet the needs of each soldier on the field (the 'tooth'). For every one soldier on the field in the army, there are ten others backing them up behind the scenes. For the Navy's A-6 plane, for every one hour of flight, there were 53 hours of maintenance needed. Tremendous support's needed to keep soldiers active & well supplied on the field. The same's true for missionaries.

For every one missionary unit (a single, couple, family), it takes on average 55 supporters to keep them on the field in full-time Christian work. We support one couple in North Africa who need to be well supplied for kingdom work there. Finances are just as much a spiritual matter as are the prayers we send. We also support 2 women in a Middle Eastern country in the work they do. Kim & I had a great number of individuals & churches as supporters when we were on the field. It takes a village.

Paul says it this way in Romans 10:14-15...*"How then will they call on him in whom they've not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they've never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they're sent?"* Paul's addressing the variables involved in reaching the nations. Basically, the nations aren't going to be reached until someone is sent to tell them. And no one's going to be sent unless there are people to get behind them in prayer & finances. Practical down-to-earth instruction. Senders are vital to the Great Commission, to see God's greatest glory & our greatest joy fulfilled!

Unfortunately, because many Christians are only focused on the top line of the covenant forgetting the bottom line, we haven't been good senders. In fact, some not at all. We've been so caught up in our materialistic culture, we do very little in supporting cross-cultural missionaries, if anything at all. So here's a great way to learn how to avoid materialism, set a limit of how much you need to live off of & stick to it.

In other words, let's say you're just out of college & your first job brings you only half of what you need. So you're happy to tithe about 3%, but that's all. In time you get raises,

but choose not to raise your standard of living. Now you tithe 10%. In 10 years, income increases, but you avoid the temptation to keep up with the Jones, as a result you tithe 20%. After 20 years, you tithe 55%! Your accountant thinks you're nuts, but you're impacting the world. All because your income increased, but your standard of living didn't. That's where most get lost. Typically, when income increases, so does our standard of living, and we always give the same percentage, or even less. This only works if one is committed to capping their needs & tithing.

Unfortunately, Barna Group Research tells us that in 2007, only 5% of all adults tithed. And among all born-again Christians, only 9% tithed 10% or more. The trend today is, the more you have, the less you give away. We may be giving bigger amounts than the next person, but percentage wise, we give less away. God's far more interested in percentages. The widow's mite was powerful. It was hardly anything, but it was a great percentage of what she had. Finances are a spiritual issue, as vital as prayer to the kingdom of God!

Let's move to #2, becoming an effective **Welcomer**. There are students from all over the world coming here to study. Well over a million international students are studying in the United States each year! Each one has tremendous real & felt needs. One Libyan student came to Columbus, Ohio to study. Muslims don't eat pork & he was worried about this. So he went to Kentucky Fried Chicken to be sure he was getting chicken. After eating lunch, he wasn't sure where to throw his trash. So he went to the nearest trashcan...which turned out to be a post office box! He had no idea if what he was doing was right, or wrong! One week a while back I watched from this podium in the middle of my sermon as one of my foster kids walked to the back. Looked at both bathroom signs & not knowing English, walked into the wrong one. I kept an eye out so that no one went in after them! I remember a friend visiting me in Indonesia who unintentionally relieved himself in the ritual cleansing basin of the Mosque! Living in a new culture is just overwhelming & often fraught with mistakes!

I can't resist a story about an American woman in Indonesia. To learn language & culture she did a homestay with a Muslim family for 6 months. Upon leaving she treated them to dinner out, at which time she'd give a nice speech singling out the father, thanking him for his great humility. Her at one end of the table, him at the other, everyone else in between, restaurant full, she stood, glass in hand to toast his humility with long-prepared, but sadly unchecked speech in heart.

A language lesson for understanding...Bapak means Father, Mister, or Sir. You conjugate words making a noun by adding a Ke & An to the beginning & end of an adjective or verb. So, tired is Capai, tiredness is Kecapaian. Add *Mu* to the end it means your tiredness. Besar sekali means very big, or great. Logically, Malu, the word for embarrassed, you'd think could be conjugated as kemaluanmu would mean your humility.

So...with all confidence of a single American woman, she stood, raised her glass, put it all together with her limited language training behind her & said, "Bapak, kemaluanmu

besar sekali!” Emphasizing the very big. But, as in English, some words don’t follow the rules & the whole restaurant went dead silent. What she thought she’d said was, “Father, your humility is so great!” What she actually said was... “Father, your genitals are so big!” Since literally translated Kemaluan actually means ‘that which would bring you embarrassment’. In 5 words she had reinforced every negative stereotype of American women Muslims might have. Praise God they were intelligent enough to grasp the mistake & good natured about it!

International students living in the States are often lonely, homesick & afraid of making mistakes since they don’t know how to do many things. They wrestle with culture shock & language. They don’t know how to get a deal, where to buy things, how to mail a letter or call home. They live in fear & uncertainty. Above all, they desperately want a friend. Are you qualified to be that friend? Well, if you can pick someone up at the airport, tell the difference between a penny, nickel, dime or quarter, shop for food & clothing, set up a bank account & write checks, or invite someone over for dinner, you’d be a great welcomer!

60% of international students here are from the 10/40 Window, where most unreached people groups of the world are located. Spanning 10 degrees latitudinal north, to 40 degrees latitudinal north, from West Africa to South East Asia. It’s home to roughly two-thirds of the world’s population & where the majority of Non-Christian religions are headquartered. The countries most closed to Christian witness, *and they’re coming to us!* In fact, over 300 presidents & prime ministers of other countries have studied here! Including the former President of Georgia, former UN secretary General Kofi Annan, the King of Jordan, Crown Prince of Norway, President of the Philippines, Crown Princess of Japan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, President of Taiwan & President of Liberia. The list goes on with many other influential world leaders. Imagine having the future king of Jordan for dinner! What an impact you could have on the world stage for the Gospel!

My friend Bakri, an Indonesian business man & pastor, leads a church right in the heart of the unreached people groups of Lampung. He studied in the States before going back to open a business & pastor a church - how could he have prepared by being surrounded by loving Christians sold out to loving all the people groups of the world? So it’s not just other religions we effect directly, we effect them indirectly by preparing a good native Christian to go back & minister to those they normally wouldn’t! Unfortunately, 80% of international students never step foot in an American home. Possibly because we’re so focused on the top line of the covenant, we’re blind to what God’s doing right under our noses!

Then we have **Mobilizer’s**, who have passion to see God glorified globally & mobilize others to be involved. There are 3 practical ways to mobilize people. Firstly, we can join or start a **prayer** group for the nations where you choose a political nation, go to *Operation World*, find out what people groups there are in that country, how many are reached & unreached, and what the needs are, then pray through that information. You can also use materials from *JoshuaProject.net* which outline people groups from across

the world. Or take this 30 day Muslim prayer guide home & use it with others. By the way, any book or organization I mention today is linked in the printed sermon.

Or you might pray for one of the main unreached religious blocks. An easy way to remember them is to think of your THUMB. Tribal - Hindu - The Unchurched (atheists, agnostics & those outside the church completely. Many people think of China when they think of this one.) - Muslims - Buddhists. Even if only 3 people are praying, remember, James 5:16 tell us “*the prayer of a righteous person is powerful & effective.*” God will use it to touch nations!

Secondly, we can **teach** people about God’s heart for the nations. Most Christians are clueless, and don’t know a fraction of what you do after sitting through these sermons. Teach them! Your community group could do a book study with the book *Unveiled At Last*. I’m planning on taking people through *Every International’s* simple video training course to discuss how to reach internationals among us. Or, you could study *Let The Nations Be Glad*, by John Piper, which also comes in DVD with a Study Guide. Or, you can gather some people & go through the *YouTeach* series from *UnVeilinglory.com* which encompasses all you’ve been hearing these past weeks, and in coming weeks in the next series. They have plenty other resources on their site as well. Plan on a study like this in the Fall when you will have started to forget, repetition teaches!

Teaching’s important. It’s been said when you hear a message, it changes your mind. When you study a message, it changes your heart. When you teach a message, it changes your life forever! When we teach others we learn well! It’s often in one ear & out the other when we sit & listen, but teaching changes a person.

A third way to mobilize is to go on a **short-term trip** & take others with you! I’d love to send a handful of you over for a week or two to see the work we support! Won’t cost you, since we’ll raise support to send you! There are also some great mission agencies out there who yearly run short term experiences. As a church we work with reputable, holistic & theologically solid agencies. For instance, *Pioneers* has excellent short term teams, to all 5 blocks of the unreached of the world. WEC runs short terms across the world as well, and they’re right in Fort Washington. And there are others as well.

Short-term trips essential. Willow Creek Church came to a point where they realized they had 10-year-old believers who were strong & mature, and 10-year-old believers very shallow in their faith. They did some research. The answer was shocking. The answer which came up over & over again involved work in a cross-cultural context. Church members would say, “When I got out of my comfort zone, and I went into the inner city of Chicago, or landed in Haiti...or when I was over in the Middle East... When I got out of the routine patterns of life & saw God work afresh through me in a cross-cultural capacity, it made me rethink everything.” Maturity is shaped through risk.

As a mobilizer, you could have a *far greater impact* by staying rather than going! Maybe God doesn’t want you overseas to plant one or two churches among a people who’ve never heard. Maybe God wants to use you right here to touch people who’ll go instead.

As a result, maybe 100 churches get planted all over the globe because you purposefully mobilized others! Mobilizers are strategic people committed to getting other believers involved in spreading God's glory across the globe!

Our last option is to be a **Goer**, one who actually leaves the comfort of home & goes to a difficult place to evangelize & plant churches where none exist! Let's focus on three reasons why many *never* become goers. And remember last week we saw God sent most out in the book of Acts through persecution. Those 3 reasons are...Firstly, **Christ's Lordship**. Secondly, **Safety**. And thirdly, **Family & Friends**.

Most Christians have a limited view of **Christ's lordship**. It goes so far. They say, "I'll follow you as long as I'm happy. I'll go to church, I see all my friends there anyway! Fun place. I'll sing on a worship team. I love singing, that's fine. But...if you want me to teach Sunday School, I'm not comfortable with that. And going overseas, no can do."

Limited lordship. They'll do whatever God wants them to do as long as they feel happy & comfortable doing it. Most Christians don't say, "I'll go anywhere, do anything, or say anything for you Lord." We may have to do things which frighten us & don't bring happiness. So we limit where we'll go, what we'll do & what we'll say. We think missions is the graduate level of Christianity. After someone's prayed enough, studied the Bible enough, done enough ministry & had enough fellowship with God's people, Then we can say we'll do anything for God's kingdom. But scripturally, that's not the case. In Matthew 10:38 we read these words...*"And whoever does not take his cross & follow me is not worthy of me."* We read again about the cross in Matthew 16:24...*"Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself & take up his cross & follow me.'"*

Picking up your cross meant only one thing to the people of Jesus' day...death. They were to realize life wasn't about them & completely die to self. Dreams, desires, hopes & aspirations, all sacrificed at the foot of the cross. Romans 12:1 says we're to be a living sacrifice & living sacrifices have three characteristics, the past means nothing to them, they have no plans for the future & they only look up!

Basic Christianity says, "I'll go anywhere, do anything, or say anything for your kingdom. I'm a living sacrifice." This is the starting point of Christianity. This is what it means to call Christ your savior & Lord. He's Lord. He can have me do anything. If Jesus says jump, I ask how high? This is what it means to give God control. But many Christians haven't given Christ His due lordship. They want to be saved from hell, but they haven't really given God control of their entire lives. So what they say on their lips & what's in their hearts are two different things.

With their mouths Christians say, "I'm willing to go." Sounds spiritual, but their hearts refuse to go. They're waiting for the elusive call from God which usually doesn't come while sitting at home we spoke of last week! And quite honestly, we hope it doesn't come! Lordship's the #1 reason we don't have enough missionaries to reach the world.

Moving on to **Safety**. Most Christians won't even consider going overseas because it's unsafe. The only thing which sells more in America than sex, is safety, but ironically, safe sex doesn't! Where'd the safe gospel come from? Certainly not the Bible. In Matthew 10:16-19 we read... *"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents & innocent as doves. Beware of men, for they will deliver you over to courts & flog you in their synagogues, and you will be dragged before governors & kings for my sake, to bear witness before them & the Gentiles..."* Doesn't sound safe at all!

In 2 Timothy 3:12 we read... *"Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted..."* To most, this thinking's totally foreign. Look at what the author of Hebrews says happened to those who went before us in the faith... *"Some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking & flogging, and even chains & imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword."* (Hebrews 11:35-37) Not safe at all. Yet we expect & demand safety. Where'd this idea come from? We're not destined for safety. In fact, we're destined for something quite different.

1 Thessalonians 3:3 says... *"...so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them."* We're destined for trials. If we're destined for them, some even to the point of death, why are we preoccupied with safety? We can't determine God's will for our lives beginning from the standpoint of safety. If we do, we'll miss what God wants for us.

Finally, the last reason most would never go into cross-cultural missions, we don't want to leave **friends & family**. We say, "I could never leave my parents or take their grandchildren away from them. That would kill them & me." Others think, "I could never leave my best friends. I don't know what I'd do without them." Arguments from sheer emotion & without realizing it, family & friends become a higher priority than God. Jesus said in Matthew 10:37... *"He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."*

Friends, family, parents & grandparents can't become a higher priority in our lives than obedience to Jesus. If they do, then we've successfully communicated we love them more than Him. They've become an idol. Our love for God must be *greater than* our love for anyone, or anything else, so we're always ready to say, "I'll go anywhere, do anything & say anything for your kingdom." We don't want to miss out on God's will because we're unwilling to leave friends & family.

We've seen four avenues to involve ourselves in God's work - becoming Senders, Welcomers, Mobilizers, or Go-ers. Hopefully God's speaking to you about which of these He wants you to be involved. And it's possible to be all four, or a combination of them. God's working toward the phenomenal goal of His greatest glory & our greatest joy. Let's join Him & step out in faith in at least one of these areas!