

It's Time for a New Kind of Missionary

5

NUMBERS TO MAKE YOU RETHINK
GLOBAL MISSIONS



ANDREW SCOTT

When you think of the
word “missionary,”
what do you think of?

A young couple in sub-Saharan Africa, leading a Bible school and feeding hungry children? Maybe a pastor building a small church in a tropical village somewhere in the South Pacific?

Who do you think of?

Jim and Elizabeth Elliot? Brother Andrew? Hudson
Taylor? Mother Theresa, perhaps?

Heroes of our faith,
all of them.

They sacrificed their lives to take the gospel to
unreached places. They were certainly missionaries.

But they aren't the only kind of missionary.

For too long, the model for modern missions has been to send the few who feel “called” to some exotic place overseas where they work full-time to spread the gospel and do ministry. The church in America, then, sends money to support these missionaries who are doing God’s work. Everyone else stays home and goes about their “normal” lives.

This model is no longer sustainable. It's not natural. And it's leaving too many Christians on the sidelines.

IT'S NOT SUSTAINABLE.

Dependence on the church back home to support missions puts a lid on the potential for expansion. There simply aren't the resources to support real growth—neither the money nor the people.

IT'S NOT NATURAL.

The modern missions movement has encouraged people to give up their vocation and go “do missions.” Not only is this unattractive to many people, it also feels unnatural to them. These missionaries' lack of activity in normal society raises suspicion at best and destroys credibility at worst. The world needs workers of all kinds, in every sector—it's time for the Church to start providing them.

IT'S LEAVING TOO MANY CHRISTIANS ON THE SIDELINES.

There are 600 million Christians in our world today. If even 10 percent of these were intentional Christ followers, actively seeking to reach the unreached, imagine what an impact that could make in the number of those who haven't heard the gospel.

It's time for all of us to recognize our role as missionaries. And it's time for more of us to go.

At Operation Mobilization, we believe it's time for a different kind of missions—and a different kind of missionary. A missionary perfectly poised for the 21st century—but with roots deep in the legacy of Scripture.

MEET BRAD

Currently Serving in the Middle East

Brad left the U.S. after school for an engineering job with a multi-national company in the Middle East. It's a well-paying job with a great benefits package that supports him and his wife and kids. But Brad and his family didn't move overseas for the job perks. Brad grew up in this desert land when his father's overseas placement took them there. Brad went back to the States for college but he always knew he had to come back. He longed to share his faith with the people he had learned to call neighbors and friends.

MEET SHAUN

Currently Serving in Finland

Shaun moved to Finland for college and to wrestle with their national team. He met his wife there and, with Finland's programs for free college study, he went on to earn three degrees and is currently working on his doctorate. During his first degree, Shaun started a Bible study group and found that more students than he'd expected were interested in attending. The group quickly grew to more than 100. Soon, they started meeting on a Sunday and formed a church, which grew to over 200 people. Today, there are five churches in Finland that were born out of that first church plant.

MEET MARY

Currently Serving in the Middle East

Mary moved to the Middle East 15 years ago for a job in a hospital as a high-level medical administrator. Her hard work over the years has earned her promotion after promotion. She is now supervising hundreds, in a country where most such leadership roles are limited to men. She has learned the language and the culture and she has had more opportunities than she ever could have imagined to tell her co-workers and her friends about Jesus.

MEET HANNES

Currently Serving in Zambia

Hannes turned down the job offer of his dreams from an architecture firm in London. He knew it wasn't where God wanted him. Instead, he moved to Zambia to found his own construction company. There, he began hiring jobless men and trained them to be electricians, plumbers, builders. They are building new apartments and the income from renting those apartments goes toward funding a school in the slums of Kabwe.

Brad, Shaun, Mary and Hannes represent what we, at OM, believe is the future of global missions.

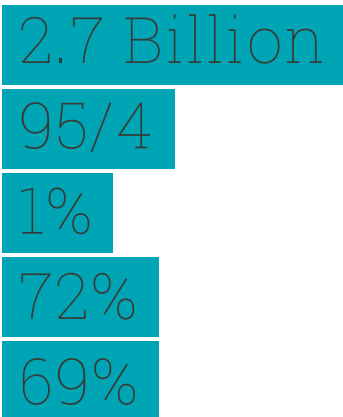
Engineers going overseas to be engineers. Doctors going overseas to be doctors. Dancers going overseas to be dancers. Accountants going overseas to be accountants.

We want to see Christ followers next to every person, in every neighborhood, in every workplace around the world.

We want to see the people of God doing the work God has called them to in places where he is not worshiped.

Why are we so convinced this is the most effective model for missions in the modern world?

Because of the following five numbers...





2.7B

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN
THE WORLD WHO HAVE NEVER
HEARD THE GOSPEL.

IT WASN'T ALL THAT LONG AGO—WITHIN OUR LIFETIME—THAT THE NUMBER WAS CLOSER TO 1 BILLION.

In 2010 the number had climbed to 1.7 billion. Now, today, more than 2.7 billion people in the world have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. It's an impossible number to grasp—too big to really comprehend.

And it's growing everyday.

Every day there are more unreached people in the world than there were the day before. Tomorrow there will be more than today. Each month, the global population increases by 6.25 million. Even in areas where the gospel is spreading quickly—such as in India, where 15,000 new believers are reportedly baptized every month¹—the growth cannot keep pace with the population boom. By 2050, the number of unreached in the world will near three billion. At a period in history when there are more Christ followers than at any other point in time, the Church is still losing ground when it comes to completing the Great Commission.

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

JESUS (MATTHEW 28:18-20)

¹ David B. Barrett and Todd M Johnson of the Global Evangelization Movement

OF ALL NATIONS...

Today, nearly 7,000 nations have yet to hear of Jesus¹. Over two billion individuals; 7,000 people groups. For Christians who have had their lives transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ, such numbers are heartbreaking. We long for the day when the world is renewed in Christ's image. We mourn the ways in which it is still broken—the areas of darkness all around us. By some estimates, more than 60 million slaves in India²—80 percent of them women and children³. 55,000 people killed in war-related violence every year.⁴ More than one billion people around the world living in extreme poverty, without access to clean water, enough food, sufficient clothing and shelter or basic medicine.⁵

60 MILLION

55,000

1 BILLION

This is a world that desperately needs Christ's love. This is a world groaning for the transforming work of the gospel.

The unreached. The victims. The forgotten. There are so many in this world who need the light of Christ.

Who will take it to them? Who is ready to go?

1 <http://globalfrontiermissions.org/the-unreached-peoples-and-their-role-in-the-great-commission/#.VcaXULfbzKA>

2 <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/10/11/meet-kailash-satyarthi-malala-s-co-winner-for-the-nobel-peace-prize.html>

3 <http://www.newsweek.com/india-tops-global-slavery-index-over-14-million-people-enslaved-284950>

4 <http://foreignpolicy.com/2011/08/15/think-again-war/>

5 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>

92/4

92%

OF THE CHURCH'S
RESOURCES ARE SPENT
IN AMERICA

4%

OF THE WORLD'S
POPULATION LIVES IN
AMERICA

**WHILE WE COULD DEBATE ALL DAY ABOUT JUST HOW
“CHRISTIAN” A NATION AMERICA IS OR ISN’T, THERE IS NO
DENYING THAT CHRISTIANITY CLAIMS A FIRM PRESENCE IN THE
AMERICAN LANDSCAPE.**

Three-quarters of Americans self-identify as Christian—and for those who don’t, they are hard-pressed to go a day without being exposed to some form of the gospel message via TV, radio, a massive billboard on their daily commute or a carefully placed Bible in their hotel room. America is steeped in Christianity.

Which is a beautiful thing—and nothing to take for granted.

But the United States represents just over four percent of the world’s population (4.4%).¹ **The gospel cannot—and should not—stop here.** While churches must continue to flourish and serve their communities in America, a hurting and lost world is in desperate need of the resources Christians in the West can offer.

The church has never before had so much money entrusted to it—especially in the West. Yet, for every \$1,000 given to Christian work in America, only one cent of that goes toward reaching the unreached.²

1 <http://www.census.gov/popclock/>

2 <http://www.thetravelingteam.org/stats/>

And money is not the only (or even primary) resource the Western church has to employ. Of those who are in “full-time” Christian ministry, only eight percent are focused outside the US. That means 92 percent of the Church’s efforts rest within the United States.

Worse still, a mere 0.5 percent of the American church’s time and talent is focused on the unreached.

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

JESUS (LUKE 12:48)

As Christians in the United States, we have been blessed beyond belief. We have money, resources, freedom to worship, education and an abundance of spiritual growth tools at our disposal. Such blessings are the result of generations before us pursuing the will of God for their communities and investing in churches around the country.

It is our turn now. What will we do with what we’ve been given?

1%

1%

THE PERCENTAGE OF
CHRISTIANS WHO ARE
DEDICATED TO FULL-TIME
MINISTRY WORK¹

¹ <http://www.thetravelingteam.org/stats/>

ABRAHAM, JOSEPH, DANIEL, ESTHER, NEHEMIAH, DEBORAH.

Each of these Old Testament figures were critical to the work God did in the world. And each of these people have something else in common: they were not full-time ministers.

- Abraham** was a wealthy businessman and God birthed the nation of Israel from his family.
- Joseph** was a high level government official and God used his work to save multiple nations from famine.
- Daniel** was an advisor to the king and God used him to influence the spiritual direction of a pagan kingdom.
- Esther** was a queen and God worked through her to save the Israelites from genocide.
- Nehemiah** was a cupbearer to the king and God tasked him with the work of rebuilding Jerusalem's walls.
- Deborah** was a judge and a warrior and God used her to lead Israel in his ways.

A businessman, government officials, servants, soldiers. The Bible is full of stories of God using individuals in all sectors of society. While the Levites were a small community of people set aside to help the people worship, much of the work of God in the world unfolded in the everyday arenas of society—in the public square.

Even in the New Testament, with believers spreading out across the Middle East and Asia to spread the gospel, the model was not for these new believers to fully give up their vocations for ministry. Paul continued to make tents. Luke was a physician. By all appearances, Zacchaeus went back to tax collecting (albeit, his vision for that work significantly altered by his new faith). These early Christians diligently spread the gospel—but they also participated in the work of the world.

Why then, today, do we expect God to primarily work through full-time ministers?

The modern faith experience in the west has been characterized by a significant division between the “sacred” and the “secular.” Pastors and missionaries and worship leaders and chaplains—full-time, paid spiritual leaders—they are the ones who do the “sacred” work. The rest of us—the 99 percent of us—go about our weeks doing “secular” work that we see as completely divorced from the work of God in the world.

Oh, sure, we know we are expected to tithe our offerings to the work of the church and volunteer on Sundays for children’s ministry. But our nine-to-five, Monday-through-Friday work in the world? Our engineering and our accounting and our designing and our editing and our doctoring? That’s not for God. We’ve compartmentalized our occupations from our faith. And, in so doing, have left the bulk of “ministry” work to the one percent we’re paying to do it.

One percent to reach more than two billion? That's not going to work.

“As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

1 PETER 2:5

The priesthood of all believers. The work of God is not meant to be done only by those select, professional few. What about the rest of us? What about the 99 percent of us? If nearly all of the Christians in the west feel their work is not sacred, then it is time to admit our model for ministry is too narrow. **We are each created by God with unique gifts, skills and talents; and when we offer those up to the will of God, for him to use according to his purposes, they are acceptable spiritual sacrifices.**

But that doesn't mean we're all supposed to become pastors. Are you good at math and physics? Then go be an engineer. Are you a manager, with a gift of empathy? Then go be an HR director. Have you spent thousands of hours crafting your skills as a dancer and artist? Then go be a ballerina.

Engineers, HR directors, ballerinas—these professions are doing essential and beautiful work. Their work—when done well—is making this world a better place. And it is God’s work.

The Christian church has a rich history of vocational discipleship—of recognizing that God is calling each and every Christian to participate in his renewal of the world—and he’s calling them to do it through the various sectors of society in which they are already working.

It is time for us to reclaim that vision. And it is time to apply that vision to the work of global missions.

72%

72%

THE PERCENTAGE OF
GRADUATING UNIVERSITY
STUDENTS WHO SAY HAVING
A JOB THAT MAKES AN
IMPACT IN THE WORLD IS
VERY IMPORTANT TO THEIR
HAPPINESS.¹

¹ <https://netimpact.org/sites/default/files/documents/what-workers-want-2012.pdf>

A NEW GENERATION OF MISSIONARY CALLS FOR A NEW GENERATION.

Today's young adults are notably different than older generations in a variety of ways. Tech savvy, digitally connected, globally minded, entrepreneurial, the Millennial generation is wired for cross-cultural experiences in a way few previous generations ever have been.

But the heartbeat of the Millennial is *purpose*.

What is God's will for my life? How do I make a difference in the world? I want my life—and my work—to mean something.

More than seven in 10 graduating university students (72%) say having a job that makes a difference in the world is very important to their happiness. Compare this to only half of all adults (53%) who say the same.

Millennials already believe their jobs can make a positive difference in the world. They are already erasing these lines between sacred and secular—they are ready to believe that God has a purpose in mind for their work.

“Who can say but that God has brought you into the palace for just such a time as this?”

ESTHER 4:14

Yet, less than one-third of Millennial Christians (31%) feel called to their current work. And only one-quarter (26%) actually believe the work they are doing is creating a better world.¹

While college students are graduating with high hopes of making an impact in the world, many—especially Christians—are finding that work falls short of that desire.

What if you could join your career—the thing you are designed for, trained for and that you love doing—with the calling of God to spread his gospel to all who have not heard? What if you could be you ... but somewhere else?

Today's global economy has created an unprecedented opportunity for workers to move from country to country. There are thousands and thousands of job opportunities available overseas in hundreds of industries, particularly for young, western-educated candidates.

These are the new mission fields and they are ripe for the harvest.

¹ *Multi-Careering* by Bob Goff and Barna Group. Copyright 2014.



69%

69%

THE PERCENTAGE OF
MILLENNIALS IN NORTH
AMERICA WHO WANT TO
WORK OVERSEAS AT SOME
POINT IN THEIR CAREER¹

¹ http://www.pwc.com/en_GX/gx/managing-tomorrows-people/future-of-work/pdf/pwc-talent-mobility-2020.pdf

THE GOOD NEWS? MILLENNIALS ARE PRIMED AND READY TO GO.

Nearly seven in 10 Millennials in North America (69%) say they want to work overseas at some point in their career—the same holds true for Millennials in Western Europe (70%).

This is a generation poised to *scatter*.

You know the story of the tower of Babel, right? The people gathered together to build a tower that reached to the heavens. They wanted to become famous for their large place of worship.

This likely isn't the first time you've heard America compared to Babel. And, while this isn't some kind of doomsday message, there is a lesson to be had here. Are we, in America, in danger of settling in ... of devoting ourselves to building large places of worship instead of going out into the world to make disciples of all nations?

“So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel—because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”

GENESIS 11:8-9

Throughout much of the rest of the Old Testament, we see a similar pattern of God scattering his people. They settled in Egypt, they settled in the wilderness, they settled in Babylon, they settled in Jerusalem. And always God scattered them. He scattered them when they grew complacent. He scattered them when he had a new purpose for them. He scattered them because his heart is for *all the nations*.

What if we did not wait
for God to scatter us?

What if we became
the first generation to
choose to scatter?

At OM, we believe the job field has become the mission field.

We want to see Christians who are skilled professionals in all industries—from arts and entertainment, to business, to church, to education, to media, to the social sector—scattering throughout the world.

We want to see these Christians doing their jobs well. We believe that as they use the unique skills, talents, experiences and passions God has given them—in the industries where he has placed them—they are bringing him glory and they are participating in his renewing work in the world.

We also believe that, as these Christians work alongside their co-workers in these far-flung places of the world, they will be given opportunities to shine with the light of Christ. They will see people drawn to them and to the hope they have through Jesus.

This is the 21st century
missionary. And we are
ready to deploy them
into the world.

At, OM, we are committed to coming alongside Christians who want to take their careers overseas—to help them find and apply for jobs, fill out the necessary paperwork, secure visas, learn the language, locate homes and settle into new communities.

Are you ready to go?

DISCOVER WHERE YOUR GIFTS MAY LEAD.

Visit www.omusa.org/go to see all of the current short-term options, trips for churches & teams, and long-term opportunities.



WWW.OMUSA.ORG/GO