

A vibrant pink orchid with multiple flowers is the central focus, growing in a black pot filled with brown perlite. The pot sits on a large, flat, moss-covered rock. The background is a lush greenhouse filled with various green plants and other flowers, including yellow and pink ones. The lighting is bright, highlighting the delicate petals of the orchid.

YOU!

ME?

WHY
NOT?

By Vernon D. Anderson

You! Me? Why not?

January 1, 1983 we looked back at 25 years of missionary service, 25 wonderful years. We would not trade them for anything. Joy, satisfaction, love, peace and complete fulfillment fills our hearts...NO GREATER work in all the world. Now we must not only look backward but forward as well. Inestimable work yet remains as we face the midway point of our lives. Who will finish the task? Will you? "Me?" you ask. Yes, you...why not?

I am sitting here at my homemade desk in the middle of Africa, at the backside of the mountain, what we often call the end of the world. I look out the window and see women rushing toward our corn mill with huge sacks of maize balanced on their heads. Men prod donkeys laden down with maize for the mill. At the same time women slowly tread up the path next to my window toward our so-called hospital, women with bulging abdomens, to sit and wait to deliver their babies. Across the yard I observe the midwives feeding a dozen or more Korks (kwashiorkor kids suffering protein deficiency). Our hospital evangelist strides by with his bag full of tracts and his Bible. All around me are TEE books (Theological Education by Extension) used to train the village evangelists. Right now my wife and I are the only missionaries on this base, the only missionaries for miles around. Why? Why don't more answer the call?

As I sit here I think of this question and I start listing possible reasons. Maybe one or more fits your own case because you need a valid reason why you are not on a mission field. These are some reasons people use for not going to the field.

"I have never been personally challenged."

For several years we attended a church having almost no interest in missions. Occasionally a missionary candidate visited looking more for financial support than to challenge anyone else for missionary service. In fact, I cannot remember our church ever sponsoring a missionary conference. From the pulpit we fed on the meat of the Word, were challenged to study deeper and deeper, to rightly divide...to stand for the truth. How zealously we studied! But when were we challenged by anyone to consider our own lives as missionaries? We had never read a missionary biography even though we were saved over five years. Every phase of church work drew our full action. Our church really emphasized the ministry and message of the Apostle Paul so much while neglecting the foremost part: Paul, the first missionary, proclaimed, "Follow me!"

While I was busy at the accounting office during 1955 Income Tax season, my lonely wife broke the ice by attending a missionary conference in progress at another church. We felt she would not hear the truth, but my wife was alone and accepted the invitation. When she arrived home that night, she was on fire with what she heard! She insisted I attend on my night off. To repeat, we never gave thought to a missionary conference and did not know what to expect at a conference with speakers from places like India and Italy who clearly presented millions in both countries without the Gospel, millions unsaved forever unless someone would answer the call. We were stunned by the immensity of their challenge. We walked out of that church changed forever. I looked at my wife and announced, "Honey, I'm quitting my job to prepare to serve the Lord as a missionary..." and she totally agreed! We both were personally challenged for the first time to serve as missionaries.

Dear Reader, if you say, "I have never been challenged by missions," let me right now reply, "There was never a time with a greater need for missionaries than right now!" The life-changing truth still faces the Church today that millions upon millions will never hear the Gospel because believers did not answer the missionary call of God: "Whom shall I send and who will go for us?" You now have a personal challenge:

- Attend a missionary conference
- Find ways for personal contact with a missionary
- Read missionary biographies
- Subscribe to and read mission publications
- Write a letter to a missionary on the field
- Get in touch with a mission organization & start praying
- Ask God to open wide His challenge to you personally.

"I haven't felt the Call."

During the book of Acts God sent loud and clear calls: "GO!" However, if you interview many in our time who tell of their call to go to preach the Gospel, you will find few who tell of a special vision or a verbal call from God. So then, how were they called? The same as we were! First we found out the need and then the Word of God confirmed the need for us to go. "How shall they hear without a preacher?" If God wants all men to be saved, He surely wants His followers to be missionaries. Not all answer the call for salvation and never enough answer the call to be missionaries. Can we honestly say the world has not been evangelized in the past thousands of years because God did not call enough believers to go? More factually, it is because His biblical call is general for all believers and too many are waiting for their individual name to be called. They fail to answer the general call. The answer we often hear is: "I'm willing to go IF God calls me." The heart-wrenching darkness of the unreached is all over the world along with God's injunction to reach out to all men-- to the ends of the earth.

What more call is needed? Until the whole world knows, the call continues: “How shall they hear without a preacher?” Whosoever may GO. It is like the call to military service by the government. The call goes out to all. When the ranks are full, then the call ceases. Also the unfit will be rejected if they answer the call but are not qualified. You can never use “I wasn’t called,” as a valid excuse when God asks you on His day, “Why didn’t you go?”

“I don’t feel I have the Gift to go.”

At the time of the eventful missionary conference which forever changed our life’s direction, I was a public accountant and my wife a housewife. We could easily have said, “We don’t have the gift.” But God has given gifts to every believer for His service in the Body. And on the mission field every one of these gifts can be used. The missionary force is a picture of the Body of Christ in action. It takes all kinds of gifts to get the job done. Yes, even accountants and housewives have a place in the missionary task. On the field you find typists, teachers, evangelists, pastors, accountants, businessmen, pilots, mechanics, drivers, builders, administrators, doctors, nurses, dentists...and on and on. We all have gifts and God can use those gifts. Not all fields have the same needs, but there are fields for all needs. You say, “Not for just a housewife,” but our children were cared for by housewives in dormitories of mission schools so we could do our work, otherwise leave the field. On the field I became a pilot when we had none. We did plumbing, electrical work, carpentry and mechanical work using gifts we did not know we had. Offer yourself and God will direct you to a place where your particular gifts are greatly needed. But don’t say you do not have the GIFT to go!

“I am not really Interested.”

Yes, you can say it. It was true for us also. For years we had no interest, but the reason was pure ignorance. We did not know the scriptural basis for missions. We did not understand that God could use us. We did not comprehend the great needs. We had never studied missions. True, we were interested in doing the will of God as born-again believers should be, but we remained babes in Christ. Evangelism stretched no farther than the county line in our area and we were responsible for it along with many other evangelicals. We never realized there were places in the rest of the world with no Gospel witness at all and these places were also our responsibility.

Once we woke up to the facts of the great need, and knew we could have some small part, our interest caught on fire and we were on our way! Too often we insulate ourselves from that fire by confining ourselves to a small

group who are mainly interested in their own doctrinal views. While holding on to the truths we believe, we must also find out what the church which is His Body is doing. Many mission bodies are being greatly used of God.

1) We need to keep interested to learn about world needs from them as opportunities open up through them.

2) Wonderful books have been written about all phases of missionary work. We need to read and study those books.

3) We need to look at the Word of God from the missionary challenge. Take time to diligently study the book of Acts which shows us the founding of the great mission movement.

4) Study the life of Paul as a missionary evangelist and church planter. See his worldwide vision and his to the ends of the earth goals, his desire to preach where Christ was not named—to the regions beyond! Your interest will be aroused and soon you can say, “Why not me?”

“I can't face all those Hardships.”

Here is where many falter. We too thought of all the diseases, pestilence, mountains, languages, unknown foods, unsafe water, when we first set sail in 1957. However we didn't sail off in ignorance. Our medical course at BIOLA School of Missionary Medicine and our linguistics course at Summer Institute of Linguistics showed us only too clearly the possibility of obstacles we faced. And yet this became the challenge of our adventure with Christ. Men climb Mt. Everest not because of its easiness but because it is a most strenuous and difficult task. To conquer the unconquered is always a challenge. We are soldiers and land must be won for Christ. Really, enemies appear on every hand, but our Captain strides ahead calling, “Follow Me and GO on!” Faith, love and hope increase the constraint to press on to win the battle.

We were green missionaries with no experience at all, yet we were going to a field where we would be both senior and junior missionaries on departure—being the only missionaries of our mission. To put it bluntly, we had no mission organized on the field where we were heading. And yet we heard the words of the great explorer: “Sail on! Sail on!” We can now look back at all the struggles, battles, wounds, sicknesses, and even death and ask ourselves if we would do it again. And the answer shouts back, “Yes, again and again if given the opportunity!”

What are obstacles? Mere things to be overcome by the power of God. The secret of problems is not to be without them but to be able to solve them. That is the real challenge. Israel faced high mountains, high walls, and the high people of Canaan land and said, “Let us turn back!” Only Joshua and Caleb knew the power of God and saw the great riches of this promised land. Israel turned back due to hardships and obstacles and lost the great reward. Many today do the same. There is brown gold to be mined which is

greater than the obstacles to be overcome to reach it. Consider the value of one soul. Then multiply it by thousands and you have riches uncountable. What is the answer: You! Yes, You!

“But I have all these nice Things.”

Yes, things often weigh us down, even cause us to become immovable. Nice car, nice home, nice furniture, nice appliances, nice sporting goods, etc. But they are too heavy to carry across the seas. You say, “But they offer so much comfort...could we leave them all behind?” A 20th century person going to the field faces problems that early missionaries never had: no lights, no central heating, no cars, no frig, no dishwasher, no TV to leave behind. One does need to consider the cost. Is the gain more than the loss?

We too had to consider this so we held a family conference. We had arrived at Bible school with a 4-wheel-trailer full of things. Could we leave now with only a station wagon half full? The four of us voted and the Lord won a unanimous vote—all things to go for a sale to help another missionary get to the field. Even our life insurance policy was a bit too heavy, but the refund added a few dollars to help pay the ticket for a fellow missionary to get to the field. It felt good to be light. We were free from the entanglements of the world. From that time on we owned nothing too heavy to carry that would hinder us from moving at the Lord’s first call. Often the things advertised to make life easier just add a heavy weight of maintenance and monthly payments. From the day our things were sold, we had no more debt and could move off to a new field as the Lord led. Was it worth it all? Oh yes, worth it all and more than all! What we gained far outweighed what we left behind, not to be compared in any way. We lost the world comforts but we gained many souls. Is there any comparison?

All those things we left behind perished long ago, but souls brought to Christ never perish. The work started goes on and on, spreading out farther and farther. Even while we sleep and after we die, the work begun long ago continues to grow and grow. THINGS perish but God’s work grows and increases spreading to the ends of the earth. Souls won to Christ cannot be compared to gold, silver, or things present or things to come! Happiness consists not of the things man possesses...godliness with contentment is great gain and equals true riches. What greater joy, what greater satisfaction than to be able to say at the end of life’s highway, “We finished our course, we kept the faith. Henceforth there is a CROWN in store for us.” Earthly gains lost are heavenly gains won! We sacrifice the temporal to win the eternal. And you?

“I can’t leave my Family and Friends.”

No doubt this excuse presents a great tug on all our hearts. When we waved final goodbyes at the Los Angeles pier and sailed away for the first time, we felt the heartbreak of severing ties with country, family and friends. Jesus said to the man who could not leave his father: “Follow Me and let the dead bury the dead. He that loves father or mother, son or daughter more than Me is not worthy.”

But we did not lose our family and friends. They remained behind but we gained a new, very big family—so many more friends who even circle the globe. Amazingly, our family and friends in USA have increased to hundreds. We can drive back and forth across USA without needing to sleep in a motel because there are friends, brothers and sisters in Christ, all along the way. As we fly from country to country we meet the family of God, now become our family: fellow missionaries, fellow believers. We lost nothing but gained everything. Our small circle increased a thousand-fold and we’ve seen and experienced things that most people only dream about.

We piloted single-engine airplanes over 300,000 miles over beautiful, tree-studded mountains, across waves and boisterous seas, across international borders, over islands of the sea. All this moving about opened doors to speak the Gospel by word or through interpreters in many languages to a multitude of people. Souls and lives were added to our family of friends. Such travels involved every conceivable conveyance: trans-ocean liners, 500 miles on airline jets down to a two-seater, 65 mph Cub, outrigger canoes, sailboats, outboards and inboards, horses, water buffaloes buses, cabs, autos, trucks...and two legs went far and wide. We’ve felt the thrill of facing death and seeing the Lord deliver us. What have we lost? We gained much that words cannot express. Dear Friend, do not fear the loss of family and friends...in Christ we’ll meet again. The Lord’s work is not loss but gain on every hand.

“It’s too hard to raise support.”

Yes, this problem turns many away from answering God’s call. We too held thoughts that to go out and beg people to support us and our work just did not seem right. Then we read the two volumes biography of Hudson Taylor: Growth of a Soul and Growth of a Work. Taylor was a man who set a rule for his life never to make his personal needs known and not to ask for funds. Contrariwise, he determined only to pray to God and trust Him to supply. We felt Taylor’s strategy was also Paul’s method with scriptural backing. Hudson Taylor lived years ago. So did Paul. Would it work today in our times when the vast majority of missionaries are not allowed to get aboard ship or plane

without guaranteed support? Hudson Taylor coined this phrase: “The LORD’s work done in the LORD’s way will never lack the LORD’S supply.” It sounded good to me, but would it take too much faith to board a ship with wife and two daughters to sail 10,000 miles away with a one-way ticket? Did we have that kind of faith? Our family decided to become a test case so we made the rule not to beg funds nor go into debt.

Support means God will guide to the supply for all your needs while you live simply, humbly, economically and do His work in His way. Do you believe? “Who me?” Yes, you! Here we can speak from personal experience because it was God’s way and He supplied bountifully for 25 years , not only for personal support but funds to obtain vehicles, houses, airplanes, Bible schools, worker support, travel expense to dozens of countries to preach and open the work of the Lord. We have never lacked any good thing—without doubt, the Lord has, is, and will provide for our every need. If an earthly father knows how to provide for his own, how much more will our Heavenly Father provide for His own? We started our primary deputation work for several reasons:

- * Challenge others to go
- * Challenge believers to pray
- * Challenge believers to support the work of missions
- * Educate Christians about missions
- * Tell of the need of millions without Christ
- * Make new friends
- * Gain experience talking before people
- * Learn how to live by faith before leaving America.

“I might Die out there.”

Yes, you may die on the field—but should that hinder you? If so, consider how you might very well die in America—meaning you cannot stay there either. Death knows no boundaries. A wise man said, “The most dangerous part about flying in an airplane is driving to the airport.” What more dangerous place in the world than in our smog-filled cities, eating chemically constituted foods, driving on highways facing drug addicts, drunkards, inexperienced drivers going beyond speed limits—statistics prove the dangers.

True, there are missionaries who die prematurely on the field, but the average is surely no greater than for those who stay in USA. The Word of God says, “He delivers them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.” Fear of death is a bondage which restrains us from doing the will of God, but “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind...We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear...There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear because fear has torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love.”

Fill your heart with LOVE – FAITH – HOPE and fear will vanish. Don't let fear hinder you from doing what you know to be God's will, which brings us to our next point.

“I lack the Faith, Love and Hope to go.”

When asked, “What is the greatest need of a missionary?” I replied: “Love. After that Faith, and after that Hope.” These three are a must if a missionary is to go forth to do the will of God...no substitute for these three!

Perfect love takes away the pain of sacrifice and turns it into joy.

Love can do what knowledge can never do. Knowledge is a necessary tool in the missionary's hand, but the power that moves the hand that holds the tool is LOVE! Faith is the hand that picks up the tool to do the work. And what about Hope? It is the vital part that gives patience to the hand, causing it to continue to work even when exhausted. Hope heals the fear of death like a balm. Without hope, death would be the most fearful tragedy ahead of us, but, “Not so!” Why? Because hope gives us the glory that follows death and turns sorrow into joy. Death brings us to the Son face to face—no more tears and no more sorrow. We shall be with Him forever, be with all the saints who went on before us. That will be glory for all of us!

Death comes to one and all...fear only hastens its arrival. Paul anticipated death when he said, “I have the desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better. For me living is Christ and dying is gain.” Humans fear suffering and the separation in death, but God promises victory over fear. To let fear hinder the answering of God's call makes the rest of life defeated and disappointed. Why not live on the VICTORY side? Through Love, Faith and Hope we can defeat anything—even death—to live a victorious life.

Love, Faith and Hope bring salvation: God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son = Love. That whosoever believes in Him = Faith. Shall not perish but have everlasting life = Hope. If you lack these three essential things, study the Word, pray, exercise spiritually, read books, talk to experienced saints. Then go on in faith believing...you can do it by FAITH!

“I really don't see the Need.”

We Americans live in a protective shell, usually knowing only one language, English. All we know about other countries is what we studied and forgot as children, or view on TV news clips. Churches surround us with various evangelistic approaches allowing us to hear the Gospel all day long. Bibles are in hotel rooms and can be purchased anywhere in 20 different versions.

Most towns in USA have a Gospel witness, so we rarely realize that countries in Europe, such as Spain, Italy, France, have a difficult time finding an evangelical witness in any town. We drove throughout Europe several times and rarely saw a Gospel preaching church. If one visits China he would note millions upon millions who never ever see a cover of a Bible much less its contents. Many tribes still have not one word of the Bible in their own language. India worships 350 million gods in thousands of villages without a Gospel witness.

We have flown our mission plane across the wide span of islands of Muslim Indonesia, and the Philippines without Protestant churches. We realize that the work done by mainline denominations 100 years ago needs to be redone because those same denominations turned liberal in doctrine along with the missionaries and the churches they founded. In some areas Protestant churches long ago supplanted the Gospel with social preaching and philosophy. What is true in other countries is also true in USA.

In no way can missions keep up with the world's population explosion. This fact was vividly seen at the Lausanne Conference on Evangelism where an electric Population Clock was started at the beginning of the conference recording births in the world rather than minutes. One million eight hundred thousand births: new people who must be reached with the Gospel. Many nations are closed to the missionary causing missions to devise other ways to reach these cut-off peoples. Radio, literature, TV, Bibles, tentmaker evangelists, etc. must reach the lost people. The Gospel must go through, over, under, around closed doors. It is not enough just to advertise with a sign on the back of your car: Christ Died for Your Sins. People all over the world stand on thousands of years of teaching and cultural ideas that must be overcome. Multitudes do not use the name Christ or the word sin in their vocabularies. It takes teaching, time and many people to overcome these barriers to understanding who God is/ what the Bible is/ who Christ is/ why Christ died/ what the listener needs to do.

Becoming a Christian is only the first step. A newborn babe requires lots of attention and care, meaning churches must be planted, people taught, leaders trained to evangelize and teach others. Time, people and money are involved because one does not fish the ocean by standing on the seashore with pole in hand. Neither do we fish the world's millions of lost souls by sitting in our churches singing and listening. If you are still not convinced of the need, next summer, instead of vacationing in some local recreational area, hop on a cheap flight overseas to talk to people about the Gospel. Look for evangelical churches. Tune in the radio and try to find Gospel broadcasts. See if you find anyone passing out Gospel tracts. Travel one end of France to the other, counting on your fingers the evangelical churches, and you'll see the need. Remember that Europe is the place where missions first started. The need is great and getting greater every moment of every day. What about you? "Who me?" Yes, you!

“I don’t even know how to start.”

When we were first challenged for missions, we knew that like every other job, we needed training. We had already studied the Bible much and even taught Bible classes and Sunday school, but we felt a time in Bible school would be necessary so we closed up shop and the four of us transferred to the Bible school city. A missionary needs knowledge to be able to teach, but he needs much, much more than this—he needs a missionary heart.

We studied, we worked, we prayed for this time to bear fruit. We attended New Tribes Mission meetings, discussed long into the night with co-students, talked with missionaries. That summer we transferred to Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada to train at Summer Institute of Linguistics followed by BIOLA School of Missionary Medicine in Los Angeles to learn medical tactics.

We submerged ourselves in missions but we needed to find a mission board in USA—a board to work under by faith—a board to become our channel for news and prayer letters and funds the Lord would send our way. We studied various fields and their needs and asked the Lord always to lead us. We thought Paraguay in South America might be the field for us. Once we applied to be tribal missionaries. Later it was India...and then we landed in the Philippines where we became absolutely convinced it was where God wanted us. Paul experienced the same thing when he tried to go to Mysia and Asia Minor but instead the Spirit led him to Macedonia in Europe! Once one starts moving toward the field, God makes His way open and directs into the country and type of work for which we fit. We follow Romans 12:1-2 and He does the rest, and He has continued to lead us from country to country for the past 25 years. We have preached the Gospel on most continents, even in communist Eastern Europe.

When we first set sail, we envisioned spending our entire lives with a small tribe on the top of some mountain in the Philippines. But God had other plans unknown to us. He opened and closed doors so we had no choice. At times the flesh rebelled and said, “Not so, Lord,” but we even went to areas where we had no desire to go. God knows the place and we had promised, “Anywhere He leads us, we will go.” We started with prayer, continued with prayer, and we are still praying. Start praying. Start moving—God will give direction. No direction can be given to a standing object just as one can only steer a moving auto. So it is: start moving toward the goal. “Who me?” Yes, you! Now.

“I love the Things of the World.”

A good job, lots of money, nice things, fun and pleasure. Our flesh craves many things. In fact, “The eye of man is never satisfied.” Who can ever satisfy all the desires mankind has?

“Godliness with contentment is great gain.” What the flesh craves is contentment, so it sends out a signal telling us, “Things bring contentment!” The person who finds true contentment is the wealthiest person in the world—this is what the world is striving for. One says, “I want a million dollars.” Why? “To be contented,” But when the million comes, it is not enough because there is no contentment. Film star Marilyn Monroe obtained all the things the flesh said would bring contentment, but one night she realized she had no contentment so she overdosed on sleeping pills thinking only in death is there contentment. Americans are the richest people on the world’s scale of things, and yet the most discontented.

We have lived in areas where people owned almost nothing at all yet found contentment and patience. For the believer, what is true contentment? It is sheer joy, thrilled to know you are where God wants you to be, doing what God wants you to do... seeing the hand of God working in others’ lives and in your life. For 25 years we lived without refrigerator, TV—lots of things the flesh craves. Has it been lack of funds that deprived us of these things? No, it is just that we found things bring discontentment. When one obtains treasured wants... one wants to add more and add more until all contentment is lost. Paul said he found contentment in all things. Even in prison he sang, rejoiced and told others to do the same. Why? He was contented because he was where God wanted Him, doing what God wanted him to do.

The two most joyful experiences I have ever known were first, when I found Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, and second, when on 14 December 1957 we boarded SS President Cleveland sailing off for the Orient. We were where God wanted us and doing what God wanted us to do. We have never lost the deeply satisfying feeling of boarding a ship or plane to sail or fly away to some distant land to bring the Gospel to lost souls. Really then, does adding things bring you contentment, or make you less contented? You own a hundred times what the ordinary Tanzanian would ever dream of having! Can you say you are satisfied? Have these things brought you great joy, peace and satisfaction? As the psychologist asks, “Are you fulfilled?” Don’t let things hold you back from doing what you know God wants and commands you to do. What you lose for Christ cannot be compared with what you gain. Why not you?

“I have other Christian work to do.”

Yes, we were also much involved in Christian work in our church: teaching, preaching, evangelizing, guardian of church funds. We were doing a lot of Christian work, and it well may be that this is just what God wants you to do. Nevertheless, this way does not release you from your connection to mission. It is true that not all can go to the mission field, but it is equally true that not enough go!

Let us say God has put you in your present capacity of Christian service. However, you too must be constrained in your heart for mission—in fact, every believer MUST be involved in mission because mission is the very intention/ objective/aim/mandate of the Church—not just a part of the purpose of the Church—it is the purpose of the Church. The Church revolves around one objective: mission to reach the lost.

The word mission carries the idea of aim/purpose/intent. Mission is the purpose/objective of the Church. For example, if one asks: “Why was Christ born?” “Why did He live on this earth?” “Why did He die?” Jesus’ own answer was: “To seek and to save that which was lost.” (Lk.19:10) “To preach where He was not named” was Apostle Paul’s great ambition. We are told to follow Paul as he followed Christ. If you serve as an elder, a pastor, Sunday school teacher, or other officer, and you feel this is just where God wants you, then you should continue while keeping involved in mission through prayer, promotion, showing hospitality, evangelizing those around you. We are the living BODY and this BODY needs hands to reach the objective to preach Christ to the ends of the earth.

“I will support Missions but I won’t Go.”

Some go and some hold the ropes, yet many use the support idea only as an excuse not to go. I was speaking at a large church on the West Coast which supported missions, at least a small part of their budget went to missions. I asked them the big question, “How many missionaries has this church sent out who are still on the field?” I already knew the answer: “None.” Another time, when I occasionally visited a denominational church, an elder of that church approached me because he knew I was going out as a missionary and said, “Why not go out under our board? We have more money than we have missionaries to support.” Money is not the key problem in missions—the key problem is finding believers who will give their lives, who will offer themselves to God to go.

Actually there are enough men and enough money in the Church to evangelize the world in a short time, but the two don’t get together. For

example, one church laid new flooring in the basement of their church and put the expense in the Missions budget. Rarely do we find a church with a Missions budget at 50% as it should be. There are some devoted Body members who consider their secular labors as their prime motive to support Missions, and these brethren are as much missionaries as we who go—they are fulfilling their part in the mandate of the Body of Christ. They are the hands that feed the mouth of the Body which speaks forth the Word of God in the regions beyond.

The Philippian church of Bible times was much involved in mission. They sent out missionaries from their church and they supported missionaries. Paul highly commends them and also the Thessalonian church:

*“We continually remember your work
produced by faith,
your labor
prompted by love,
and your endurance
inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ...”*

*You became imitators of us and of the Lord...
You became a model to all the believers
in Macedonia and Achaia.*

*The Lord’s message rang out from you -
Your faith in God has become known everywhere.”*

It is God’s love that constrains us to go and serve. It was nails of love that kept Christ on the cross. Only love will cause us to take up the cross and follow Him...everywhere.



Vernon Anderson grew up in Minnesota during the depression and married his high school sweetheart, Darlene Carlson. Vernon & Darlene remember themselves during that time as “American pagans” with no interest in spiritual things. Faith in Jesus Christ for salvation came in 1950 through a landlady’s tenacious evangelism. Vernon & Darlene jumped eagerly into their new-found faith, learning how to lead Sunday School, preach on street corners and teach a weekly Bible class—all while being disciplined by Pastor Roscoe Kent in dispensational truth.

Faith opened their hearts for missionary service which led them to Milwaukee Bible College in 1955. They were challenged by the deaths of the five missionary martyrs in Ecuador and committed themselves fully to God’s worldwide mission. Vernon and Darlene were the first missionaries to be sent out Things to Come Mission, arriving in the Philippines on January 1, 1958. Faith-living moved the Andersons forward—preaching, teaching, helping to establish Bible institutes to train pastors, even to taking up flying airplanes to spread the gospel of God’s grace over the whole archipelago.

In 1973 Vernon & Darlene turned over their Philippine ministry to faithful men and moved to Indonesia. Vernon poured himself into preaching the gospel, teaching the Bible dispensationally and mentoring new Christians. Although black-listed by the Indonesian government in 1979, the Grace message had already been established in the lives of many university students and their families, who then went out as evangelists to plant Grace churches throughout that fourth largest nation. Undeterred, the Andersons went on to develop pastoral training programs in Tanzania, Brazil, Kenya, Cameroon, and South Africa for the next 25 years.

In 2005 Vernon & Darlene returned to the USA due to Vernon’s degenerative eye condition and Parkinson’s Disease. They served at TCM headquarters in Indianapolis, taking responsibility for literature and mail. Vernon entered the presence of the Lord on May 20, 2012. Darlene continues to work in the office.

Vernon proved that the life of faith still works in modern times and that the message and methods of the Apostle Paul must continue to guide missionary activities. Vernon said, “When you get to the end of the road and look back, what will you see?” To answer for him, we see hundreds of churches throughout the world being led by faithful men and women. We see a family which loves the Lord Jesus Christ. We see thousands of lives transformed through his testimony and love.