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EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD

ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS FOR GOD

John 20:19-23

I have decided to use this as a text -- these were the words of Dr. William Carey at the annual association meeting in 1791. Held at Nottingham and Carey was the preacher. He used as his Scripture, Isa. 54:2-3.
" Enlarge the place of thy tent and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations. Spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes. For thou shall break forth on the right hand and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. He used his subject - expect great things from God -- attempt great things for God."
The impression made by the discourse was so decided that the following resolution was arrived at. That against the next meeting of ministers at Kettering - a plan should be prepared for the purpose of forming a society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen.

Now there are two or three things that I would like to tie our thoughts around this morning:

1. William Carey's Commission.
2. The Foundation of Carey's Commitment.
3. How Carey Fulfilled The Text.

I. William Carey's Commission

In an interesting old book by J. B. Myers which was published many many years ago - 1887, which I had picked up somewhere from a second hand book store. I do not really remember, but the contents of that book were so fascinating that I thought I would bring you a just of some of those things about this missionaries

life.

He was (born) in Paulerspury, August 17, 1797. He was brought up in a cottage. His father had a position as perish clerk and the office of school master. And his father was a journeyman, and William was taught by his father, in company with the village lads. He was eager in his pursuit of knowledge - he would lie awake at night reviewing things. His mother often heard him doing so.

He had a (little room) his own little room. And what an interesting room it became. He had numerous birds, eggs, the walls were stuck with insects, and botanical specimens. These were preserved with utmost care. Many other things he found along the lanes and in the forests. His sister (Mary) remarked that she indulged a great deal of pleasure with William. Going over the dirty roads - getting new plants, finding insects. And he took great delight in showing her the beauty in the growth of plants.

His (literary) tastes as a young boy were books of science and history, and voyages. Novels, he said, disgusted him. He avoided them. He did read Pilgrim's Progress with eagerness.

His (botanical) taste was greatly encouraged by his uncle who was a gardener in the village. And of course, one day Carey became an eminent horticulturists.

At the (age) of 14 William began as a field laborer to earn his livelihood but because of a skin infection from exposure to the sun, he was compelled to abandon this and he turned to the (shoe making trade). This became his special occupation.

Therefore, he worked at this trade and the province of God linked him with individuals, scholars, poets, and reformers. And in this hand-craft, Carey had

the opportunity of meeting with learned people.

He had some books to come into his possession - a New Testament Commentary. This led him to study the Greek language.

He, of course, at his temptations as with every other young man - underwent great change. And he felt himself ruined and helpless. And at last he was brought to depend upon the Saviour.

His marriage with Dorothy Placket - before he was 20 years of age - pressed him to work harder in his business. This marriage did not really prove suitable because she had little sympathy with her husband's tastes. So his domestic troubles, and he also had business troubles, and his little daughter in her 2nd year was taken with a fever and died. He faced starvation, in his shoe making business. And at last, he opened an evening school. He began to teach and this helped to supplement his salary. There was a small church at Olney and in June 1785 - he appeared before the church. And gave a satisfactory account to God and his soul - and was admitted as a member. He was invited by the church to preach. He was given a probation period in which he agreed to preach here once a month.

So it was not until after more than a year of this kind of preaching, that it was agreed universally to call him as their minister. So Mr. Carey then accepted the office of pastor. For three months the call was under consideration. Six months after his acceptance, the ordination took place. It is very obvious that the people being (poor) this was not sufficient to support his family.

But all the time, (in) his mind, there was a (great missionary idea) that if the English and the Scotch people could somehow organize societies for carrying the

Gospel, how wonderful it would be. So convinced was he about this, that he persuaded the ministers of the North Hampton District to set aside an hour for prayer the (first Monday) in every month. When especially the spread of the Gospel to the utmost parts of the globe was to be the object of the most fervent request. So this method took hold and the more Carey thought about the religious condition of the world - the more convinced that he was that the responsibility rested upon Christians to send forth this knowledge. This idea kindled within him like a fire.

In his (workshop) and also in the school where he taught, he had (a large map) consisting of several sheets of paper pasted together. Made by himself, and with a pen he had placed every nation in the world - and had entered into it - whatsoever he had discovered in his reading. He included the population, the kind of people, their religion. All of these facts, he used every opportunity.

A big decision had to be made in his life, in 1789 when the church at (Leicester) had given him an invitation to make a trial with them. On which account, the appointed meeting in his own church was for the people to pray about the affair. The call was accepted and soon he moved to this new place. It was about this time in (1791) that he preached this noble sermon, on "expect great things from God and attempt great things for God."

After it was decided to (organize society) the ministers retired to prayer, and plans - and submitted even an offering. In the inquiry into the obligations of Christians to use their means for conversion of the heathen - in which the religious states of the different nations of the world - the success was formerly undertaken, by Carey. The society was organized and funds were increased - and (no sooner) than the society gotten underway and a resolution passed - that (Carey) offered himself his own services.

When the question was asked - who will venture to explore the gold mine in India? Carey replied that I will venture to go down - was his instant reply. But remember, that you must hold the ropes.

Hence, this is (another saying) of Carey that has been used in missionary circles - the matter of holding the rope. He was talking to his friend Fuller, and Riley, - that these brethren must hold the rope. Now the congregation where Carey was serving did not want to consent to him going. We have been praying, said one of the members, for the spreading of Christ's kingdom. And now God requires us to make the first sacrifice to accomplish it.

And it was entered into their (church book) so that his love to these poor miserable creatures was put on record. And the expense of loosing one whom they loved as their own soul.

Of course Carey had a (greater difficulty) because Mrs. Carey refused to accompany him. He entreated her - but she was determined not to waver - but he wrote if I had all the world, I would give it to have you and the dear children with me. But the sense of duty is so strong, as to over power all other considerations. I could not turn back without guilt on my soul. Tell my dear children, dearly! I pray for them constantly. And be assured that I love you most affectionately.

This letter was written to his wife as he departed to the seaport town and they were preparing to go and depart. And they were having he and Thomas quite a problem in getting passes on a vessel. So the party consisted of Carey, Mrs. Thomas, and their child, and one of Carey's son by the name Felix. Who had agreed to accompany his father. On April, 1793, the vessel was delayed for

weeks off the Isle of Wight and there was a bitter disappointment. Because the missionaries were ejected from the ship. Because news had come that they had (not) obtained their license from the directors, to travel and to enter India.

So Carey and Thomas then through the province of God, searched out whether there was a ship sailing for Bengal. And they discovered that there was a ship and he went back to North Hampton to secure some more money and also to see Mrs. Carey again - and see whether or not her objection still stood. And there was great relief for (she agreed to go) on the condition that (her sister) would go with them. Then she would be willing to give her consent. Now this was a larger expense - and so in June, 1793, missionaries eventually started. They were off. And it was 5 months in passage. Until the 9th of November when the missionary party arrived in Calcutta.

Now this is just a little brief history, of a man who at the age of 12, had mastered the Latin language and ended his formal education at the age of 14. Had taken up a shoe cobbler's job, and was baptized in 1783 by Dr. John Ryland. And it was entered into the church record "baptized today, a poor journeyman shoe cobbler." No man is mentioned - but no doubt it was William Carey. And now this man is on a ship and he is landing in Calcutta.

II. The Foundation Of Carey's Commitment

This is found in John 20:19-23. The great commission which Christ, our Lord, has given us. We engage in it today - not because we want to ~~but~~ because we choose to. Not because we like to but because we have been told to. The church had been under orders - the risen Lord had commanded -- go preach, make disciples.

Five times in our Bible this occurs. This was the burning possession of William Carey. John records that Jesus said on the day of the resurrection itself, for men to go.

Matt. 28 says that he told his disciples later in the mountains at Galilee. Luke 24 says that during a period of 40 days he talked to them about this commission. Acts 1:6 tells them just prior to his ascension.

Mark 16: he told them that he was committed to them, the message to be carried.

On the evening of the first Easter for fear of the Jews - the disciples meet secretly behind closed doors. Through these closed doors comes the risen Jesus - stands in their midst, and they are terrified. He tells them to have no fear. To be of good courage. And he gets them to throw open the door and to risk the dangers, and to march out in spiritual conquest of the world. In four short sentences.

First, he says peace be unto you. Verse 19 and 21. He says it twice. This was the Jewish greeting. And it meant more than just what meets the eye. The beautiful proof of his love and his compassionate spirit. Giving the 12 the peace they needed to confirm his words with a sign.

It meant peace of conscience through his death. Many of the disciples had denied him and has deserted him and now they needed forgiveness for the way they had acted. He had made the peace through the cross.

They knew that they needed peace of mind in that room, on that day of the resurrection. They had not expected to see him. But here he shows his wounds and

his hands to them.

The next things he says, V. 21, as my father has sent me - even so, send I you. This is the simplest form of the great commission. It is at the same time, the most profound form and it is most challenging. And therefore, it may be the most neglected. The father sent me - I send you.

How did the father send the son.

— first by birth into the world. He did not stay in Heaven, he sent him into the world. Layed aside his glory and took on the form of a human.

— second to live a life in the world. He assumed the nature of man. He shared our experiences. Dwelt among us - exposed himself to the temptations - loneliness, opposition, mixing freely with men. In sinful secular society.

— third, he was involved in death for the world. God's son did more than just take upon himself our nature. He took our sins, and he was made sin and made a curse. And he was the sin bearer. He did not stay apart. He made himself one of us.

So as the father sent him - so send I you. Now here is our failure. And this was the thing that Carey pondered about. We do not identify with this. We think that we can proclaim the message from a distance. We sometimes appear like people who shout advice to drowning men from the safety of the shore. We do not dive in to rescue them. We are afraid of getting wet. And indeed a greater parallel. But Jesus did not broadcast Salvation from the sky. He didn't get on television and tell everybody about it. He visited us. In our great humility. And this was the thing that bothered William Carey. That he knew if the man could

be empowered by the spirits of God, V. 22, to receive the spirit - to carry this message then the sins of men would be remitted. V. 23. And this does not mean as a priest who would hear our confessions - but our commission is to identify as Christ did - proclaiming the Gospel to the world. This is the message that will change the world.

III. How Carey Fulfilled The Text or the Commission

Now let us come back to this man - as he lands in India. Thomas had some knowledge because he had lived in India before. And on reaching Calcutta, they had to make some investments and they bought some articles of merchandise. And Thomas undertook to resell and to realize some advantage from the sale. Carey advised Thomas to pursue his medical profession - he was a doctor. Carey sought to get a job with a company in an botanical garden. The missionary had a little problem getting food, and supplies. And the family was taken with illness upon their arrival there in Calcutta. They sought to go and get some jungle land and clear it and build a hut. And they could have a garden and make out on the farm. But about that time a Mr. Udny of about 200 miles distant, had trouble - his brother and his brother's wife drowned crossing the river. And he was an Indigo manufacturer. And he was at that time erecting two factories. And so he invited Thomas to take one factory and Carey to take the other as managers. And so this was like relief out of prison. In 1794 - the factory gave them an ample living and they had time to preach and to work in the surrounding country. And of course Carey begin to translate the Bible - beginning with Genesis, Mark, Matthew, and James in Bengalee. And this was his own composing. He worked at this and of course, his one child died and he knew the methods of agriculture that were used and he sought to get more missionaries. And he said that it was absolutely necessary to send them in in groups so they could train their children

and live in a compound, and manage the household. Carrying on the preaching and the teaching, and others could look after food.

15 miles above Calcutta was a little Danish settlement - Serampore. Now this was to become his home. He had already meant home - holding the ropes - and he took up residence here, of course, he began a printing business. And one newspaper made a mistake, and confounding Baptist with Papist. Which announced four Papist missionaries. And of course they looked upon these new comers as spies. He was fortunate in getting a printing press that was advertised in the Calcutta newspaper - and he was determined to use this press in his professional work. Of course he meant with an anti-missionary spirit. Even the government at times put clamps on his distributing books or pamphlets. And Carey was very patient about this - he did not want to trespass upon their feelings, but felt that through prayer and time things would work out. And every hour of the week and every day was occupied with translating, reading proofs, lecturing, and preaching. And in the time, Carey lost his wife. Later he married Charlotte Emelia, who was of a noble family. And she assisted him in his work.

Carey was a great translator and he said, few people know what may be done until they try to do what they undertake. He was careful in his work, he had a problem of increasing and improving the native paper. It was subject to the attack of insects and in four or five years, some of this paper that they were using would be taken over with insects. He had to work on this and found a preventative. This effectively worked on the destroyer.

In doing this, he imported a steam engine, 12 HP for working the paper mill. Now this was an interesting thing for it was as exciting as the first steam boat. Because the natives looked around to see the machine a fire as they call it.

On March 17, Dr. James F. Heaton, pastor of the Tabernacle Baptist Church (118 S. Person St.), Raleigh, spoke on misunderstandings that hamper our ministry.

He pointed out that difficulties among Christians often come from misunderstandings. The art of communication is a most difficult art. Sometimes we mis-hear as did the bank teller who thought the lady said, "This is egg money," when she said, "This is Aid money." Her resentment is understandable when he replied: "The old hens must have been working hard."

Often we say words that convey a meaning other than what we intend, as the daughter who in thanking the pastor for his visit with her mother, said: "Mother always feels better after you leave."

Misunderstanding sometimes results from the failure to get all the facts. Too often we take people for granted and fail to express the appreciation that would mean much in our personal relations. Sometimes the chip on our shoulder comes from our own head; our block-headedness has made us supersensitive and touchy.

Jesus has given us the method of reconciliation, and we should practice it. If we have something against someone, we should go to that person and try to make it right. Most misunderstandings will disappear with a little kindness and understanding. Let's think well of people until we have reason to think otherwise.

"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Eph. 4:31-32).

Dr. Heaton is a graduate of William Jewell College and of Southern Baptist University.

They said it was of the architect of the Gods. They began to publish the New Testament in Bengalee. Then they published some volumes in the Old Testament. And soon they had 12 different languages which Carey had worked with in his press - and the 12th one was Chinese. He was a great man with languages.

He was a great man in trying to improve the social and the civil conditions of the people. One of the first things he sought to get changed was a matter of the widow being burned with the dead husband. When the husband died, the widow had to get on the pile and there lay down by him and put one arm around his neck, put dry Coco leaves over them and then two bamboo's fastened them down and the fire was put to the pile - and it was impossible for a woman to flee or struggle and she was forced to get upon the pile and to get burned.

Another thing that he worked upon was the matter of sacrificing the babies. Tossing them to an allegator or putting them in the river. And it took Carey about 25 years to get this accomplished.

He was also a great naturalists he made a great collection and began a museum there - birds, beasts, fish, reptiles. All sorts of things - he said, I have 12 sorts of grass hoppers and crickets and we have 8 or 10 sorts of ants. And he had all sorts of insects, that he had labeled as well, as the things of science like (minerals and ore). He had organized a geological society. He had organized one of agriculture and botany.

He had even sent back home and had some of his friends to send him some roots and some seeds - and one of his missionary friends wrote about his delight about getting a daisy.

Thrice welcome, the little english flower - my mother country is white and red. In rose are lilly - until this hour. Never to me such beauty spread.

Transplanted from thy island bed.

A treasure in a grain of earth
Strange as a spirit from the death
Thine embryo sprang to earth
Thrice welcome, little english flower

To me the pledge of hope unseen
When sorrow, would my soul or power
With joys that were or might have been
I'll call to mind how fresh and green.

I saw thee walking from the dust
Then turned to heaven with brow serene
And placed in God my trust.

There are four or five other stanzas of that - but the daisy in India was quite a delight to Carey in his garden. He had a man, especially trained, who knew the names and the plants of over 250 in his garden. He wrote a catalog of the plants for the east India companies, botanical gardens in Calcutta. And it became a standard work.

In 1811, he wrote a paper on agriculture. He wrote about the cultivation of timber. And how it should be preserved. In a place of 150 million souls - as a missionary he organized a seminary. And he spent his last years as a college president. But he was proud of the fact that he had saved many victims from suffering, from superstition, who were destroyed on the funeral piles and the graves for the living, in the rivers under the sacred places all over India.

And the children were smothered and strangled, or thrown into the mouth of an allegator.

Carey believed that the commission could be carried out. Quite often he used the history of Gideon and would with great deep feeling, comment on the encouragement that the cause of God can be carried on to victory. Even by feeble and apparent insufficient means.

On the last Sunday in 1800 more than 7 years after he arrived, Carey baptized the first Indian convert. But the next day, in the mission, Bengali school was without pupils. Not a person showed up for class. Every person was afraid that his boy would become a Christian.

We need to come back to the way that Carey organized his mission -- based on prayer. I was interested in reading a little article -- Who will take Pop's place. Published Nov. 1971 in a cemetery in Gastonia, N. C. Pop Kale was buried. The tomb stone reads -- Christ the only hope. Charles Chilton said somebody needs to take his place, in the life of our family. I'd like to tell you why. Now he was the pastor of Triangle, Va. -- Baptist Church. And Pop Kale was a member. And he got up early mornings and spent an hour in Bible reading and prayer -- and said that Pop Kale told him that he had him at the top of the prayer list. And he prayed everyday for him. This young pastor went out as a missionary to the Philippines in 1969. And he knew that this man was praying for him everyday. He said, regardless of what happens, somebody at home will pray. And he made a great appeal for somebody else to take his place.

Alexander Buff, a young Scotchman, visited Carey just before his death. And he said the last thing Carey said, you have been talking about Dr. Carey. Dr. Carey -- he said, when I am gone -- say nothing about Dr. Carey -- speak about

Dr. Carey's Saviour. June 9, 1834 -- in his 73rd year -- he passed away. He practiced the text -- expect great things from God, attempt great things for God. From the lowest poverty he arose to the highest honors of literature. The question today is, who will fill his shoes. ↗