

MORE
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MEDITATIONS
for
MISSIONS

“Chris Anderson writes, ‘Missions isn’t *a* ministry of the church—it’s *the* ministry of the church.’ If so, then every Christian should be vitally involved in missions. Some will devote their lives to full-time missionary endeavors, others will serve as pastors who teach about and encourage missions, and all should be ‘senders.’ Whatever your role in missions, this short book will give insight, biblical instruction, inspiring stories, and convincing reasons why every believer should want to dedicate their lives to the ministry Christ has given His church.”

—**Gary Gilley**, Assistant Pastor of Southern View Chapel, Springfield, Illinois

“With one exception, I have known each of the contributors to this volume for many years. They represent the finest missionary thinking and practice among conservative evangelicals today. I reference them regularly as exemplars to my students. My life work as a missiologist has been to increase their tribe.”

—**Mark Vowels**, Veteran Missionary and Missions Professor

“*More Gospel Meditations for Missions* is a timely and needed call to refocus our hearts on the transforming power of the gospel. Each reading gently but clearly draws the reader back to daily dependence on Christ, reminding us that missions is not driven by extraordinary people, but by ordinary believers faithfully submitting every part of their lives to Him. I was personally encouraged and motivated through these meditations, and I believe they will stir a renewed passion for gospel-centered living and global mission.”

—**Donna Bixby**, Missionary and International Director of Jonathan’s House,
Central African Republic

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Portions of Tim Keese's articles first appeared in various issues of the 2020 volume of *TableTalk*.

Cover photo taken by Chris Anderson on the island of Yap while visiting missionaries in 2024.

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Introduction

In 2011, I wrote the following in the first volume of *Gospel Meditations for Missions*: “Missions isn’t an addendum that was stapled onto normal Christianity. It’s at the heart of Christianity because it’s at the heart of God Himself.” Fifteen years later, I’m more convinced of that principle than ever. Missions isn’t *a* ministry of the church—it’s *the* ministry of the church.

During those fifteen years, the trajectory of my life has continually moved toward missions. There’s been an irresistible pull—a Great-Commission gravity—that keeps tugging at me. From 2012 to 2021, I was privileged to pastor a missions-minded and missionary-sending church in Atlanta. I worked for a missions organization for several years. And now I’m full-time with Church Works Media as a Bible teacher and missions catalyst.

The missionaries who contributed to the first volume are all back. JD Crowley has continued his amazing linguistic and missions work in Cambodia despite a bout with cancer. World-traveler and missions-enthusiast Tim Keese, the founder of Frontline Missions International, continues to engage his profound pen for the cause despite battling cancer twice in the last decade. David Hosaflook has taken contextualization to a Hudson Taylor level; he’s regularly tapped by the Albanian press as an expert on Albanian history. Now his ministry footprint is expanding beyond Albanian borders. Joe Tyrpak, my long-time friend and collaborator, continues to faithfully pastor in Ohio. He’s a model of biblical fidelity and missional fervency.

We are adding two new writers to this sequel. Philip Hunt is a pastor and educator in Kitwe, Zambia, and his visionary work at Central Africa Baptist University has reached all across the continent of Africa. I am glad to count Philip among my friends. Dan Anderson is the director of BGFM Global—and my brother. He’s a principled and effective leader, and he’s led BGFM Global into a stronger application of indigenous ministry principles than any mission I’ve seen. I admire him, though I prefer to keep that a secret.

As always, Abby Huffstutler has done a tremendous job editing, making us look smarter than we are. Thank you, Abby! And many thanks to Scott Ashmore who did the artistic layout for this book and continues to make himself invaluable to Church Works Media. Scott suggested that we let this book unfold thematically. To that end, the book addresses God’s heart for the nations (days 1–5), the call of missionaries (days 6–12), the gospel message (days 13–17), the local church (days 18–25), and the need for endurance (days 26–31).

The Lord has used the first *Gospel Meditations for Missions* devotional to teach Christians about missions and to thrust them toward the mission field. If this little book can do the same, we will rejoice yet again. As we write, we continually remember the Lord Jesus’ prayer request from Matthew 9:38: “Lord of the harvest, send forth laborers!” Grace.

Chris Anderson

“God So Loved the World”

The Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. (1 John 4:14)

Read John 3

“Salvation is from the Jews.” Jesus said so in John 4:22. The Jews had the Scriptures, the tabernacle and temple, and the priesthood. Most importantly, the Jews had the promise of the Messiah—a Son of David Who would be born in the city of David.

But the salvation which would come into the world through the Jews was intended for *all* nations. Way back in Genesis, we learn that Abraham’s Son—the Lord Jesus—would be a blessing to “all the nations of the earth” (18:18 and 22:18). The apostle John repeatedly emphasizes and celebrates the universality of the gospel—that it is for *the world*. Here’s a sampling of his descriptions of the universal offer and intent of the gospel.

“Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). In John the Baptist’s classic announcement of Jesus as the Lamb of God, he tells us that Jesus came not only to remove the sins of believing Jews, but of *the believing world*. The term “world” clearly means *believers from all over the world*, not every person in the world. Those who don’t trust in Christ will not have their sins forgiven. But the gospel is good news for *everybody*, regardless of their ethnicity or geography.

“God so loved the world” (John 3:16–17). In what is very likely the most famous verse in all the Bible, we learn that God loves *the world* and will save “whoever believes,” regardless of their ethnicity. Jesus came to save the world—all who would believe—not to condemn them (John 3:17 and 12:47).

“This is indeed the Savior of the world” (John 4:42). Nobody was more hated in Jesus’ day than the Samaritans—half-breeds who had both Jews and Gentiles in their family tree. But when Jesus saves the Samaritan woman—and through her influence, many in that village—the now-believing Samaritans rejoice that Jesus is “the Savior of the world”—not just of the Jews, the respected, or the privileged. John makes the same point in the book of 1 John, telling us that Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the world (2:2) and that “the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world” (4:14; see also 4:9).

“For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (John 6:33). Once again, we are told that Jesus came from heaven to save people from all over the world. He is the bread of God—the bread of life—for “anyone” who believes (6:51).

“I am the light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5). One of the famous “I am” statements of Jesus in the book of John is His claim to be Light. It’s a motif that fills the Old Testament and New Testament alike (Psalm 27:1; 1 John 1:5). Jesus is the Light of *the world*—the One Who entered the darkness to rescue people from all over the planet!

“I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also” (John 10:16). Jesus reveals Himself to be the Good Shepherd Who lays down His life for His sheep (and apparently not for goats, by the way—John 10:11, 15, 17, 18). But in a statement that is underappreciated by most, Jesus explains that He has sheep who are not Jews. He offers salvation to all.

“As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world” (John 17:18). John rehearses again and again that Jesus was sent into the world to save the world. And Jesus has sent us into the world as His deputies. We’re not only saved *out of* the world; we’re sent *into* the world. Are we going? Do we share Jesus’ heart for all humanity? Do we long to see a universal assembly worshiping the Lamb of God Who has taken away their sins? If so, let’s go!

Let the gospel infuse you with Jesus’ love for the lost from all over the world. —Chris

Whoever will drink of the water I will give him will never be thirsty again. (John 4:14)

Read John 4:1–42

“Dear Christians,” a young Muslim girl wrote from the distant nation of Uzbekistan in Central Asia, “please do not send me any more of your literature. My father has promised to kill me if you write me again.” She added to this sad note, though, a powerful postscript. “Here is the address of a friend. Write to her, and she will give your letter to me.”

This was one of the first letters I received in the early days of our mission, and I’ve never gotten over the real life-and-death issues at stake in the gospel’s advance. This brave girl was taking a Bible correspondence course when her father’s threats fell upon her, but her thirst to know the only One Who can satisfy was so intense that she was willing to risk everything to know Him. Thirst—deep, desperate thirst—is a painful thing. That’s why to me the most heartbreaking words Jesus uttered on the cross were words exhaled in agony: “I thirst” (John 19:28). The longing, life-and-death nature of thirst makes it a perfect descriptor for our need of God. There is Spirit-driven desperation in those who thirst to find the water of life. Even though the path to this spring is often filled with twists and turns and pitfalls, sovereign love is strong.

That was certainly the case with Yassin, a man in Morocco who was thirsting for something—or Someone—outside of the only religion he had ever known, Islam. In his search, Yassin pirated a copy of the Hollywood film *Son of God* to try to learn Who Jesus is. That led him to the Roman Catholic church in his city, but he never got past the door because the guards ran him off. A person leaving Islam isn’t something to be encouraged because it could mean trouble.

And so, this thirsty man went on searching until he stumbled onto a Christian radio broadcast, where he got patient, biblical answers to his questions. He then found a church, and this time he wasn’t cast out—instead, he was welcomed and spent many hours with a pastor, who is himself a trophy of grace from Islam. Together, they examined the Scriptures and the claims of Christ on this wanderer’s life. At last, Yassin tasted for the first time the cold, refreshing, life-giving, good news of the gospel and believed.

When someone in Morocco comes out of the prison house of Islam, where the darkness is deep and the bars are strong and the cost of escaping is great, it can only be a work of God. Like the Samaritan woman, this Moroccan man also was brought to a well where he drank deeply and was satisfied, for Jesus said: “Whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:14).

So rejoice and join in the joy in heaven over Yassin, our newborn brother, and for all those who are being gathered from across all nations. For God’s life-giving invitation continues to reach the ends of the Earth.

Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. (Isaiah 55:1)

Jesus said to them, ... “Whoever believes in me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35)

The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who desires take the water of life without price. (Revelation 22:17)

Let the gospel’s saving, satisfying work give you fresh joy today. —Tim

Three Unchanging Foundational Principles for Modern Missions

That the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. (Romans 15:9)

Read Romans 15:8–24

The missionary work of the church reveals where we stand on one fundamental question: Are people without Christ worth saving? Today, an estimated 2.5 billion people—40% of the world's population—have never heard of Jesus Christ. This staggering reality about the needs of our world demands that faithful Christians understand three unchanging, foundational principles and make them part of our spiritual DNA.

The mission is unchanged. In Romans 15, Paul reminds us that Christ came not only to confirm God's promises to the Jews but also "that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy" (v. 9). This mission begins with God Himself doing the work of reconciling sinful human beings to Himself. It originates with the Father, is enacted through Jesus Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, carried out by the church, and received by the world. The mission of God remains constant: the verbal proclamation of the gospel that transforms hearts and creates worshipers from every nation, tribe, and tongue.

The power is unchanged. Writing to former pagans who once worshiped through temple prostitution and drunken revelry, Paul declares they are now "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another" (v. 14). This is the radical transforming power of the Holy Spirit. But the same power enables bold, courageous proclamation of the gospel today. From Jerusalem to Illyricum, covering 1,200 miles, Paul fulfilled his ministry through this unchanging power. And it was the same Holy Spirit at work Who transformed my friend Mohammed, a former Muslim scholar from Darfur who became a church planter in Sudan.

The method is unchanged. God's strategy has never varied: He uses people. Ordinary people like you and me. Paul made it his ambition to preach where Christ had not been named, laying foundations for reproducing churches that would reach further into unreached regions (vv. 20–21). God doesn't depend on better methods, more machinery, or increased funding. He looks for men and women who will represent Him in this world. The person is the plan.

Consider the unlikely servants God has used throughout history: Moses stuttered, David was too young, Abraham was too old, Timothy had ulcers, Peter was afraid of death, Paul was a murderer. Yet God chose "what is foolish in the world to shame the wise" and "what is weak in the world to shame the strong" (1 Corinthians 1:27).

The church is not a cruise ship designed to transport us comfortably to heaven. It is a battleship storming the gates of hell to deliver those enslaved in bondage to sin and Satan. And there are huge groups of people who are still completely captive to sin and unreached—including 987 unreached people groups in Africa alone, representing 430 million people who have never heard the gospel!

So, we're back to where we started—considering our world's great need for Christ. In light of these three foundational principles from Romans 15, here are some key questions: Have you believed the gospel? Are you proclaiming it to others in the power of the Holy Spirit? Is it your ambition to be engaged in God's mission?

Let the gospel and the plight of the unreached move you to pray, give, go, and send gospel workers to the mission fields of the world. —Philip

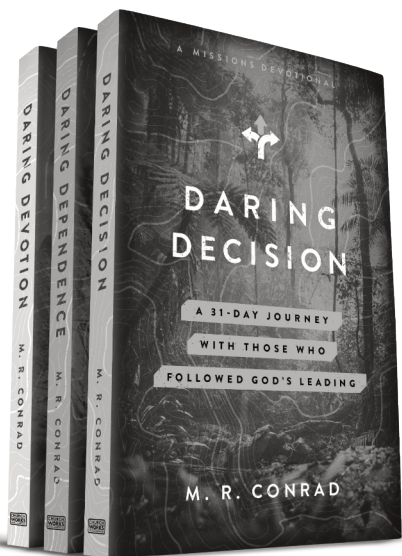
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“An inspiring and instructive collection of devotional readings. Extremely beneficial and highly recommended!”

—Vance Christie, Christian Biographer



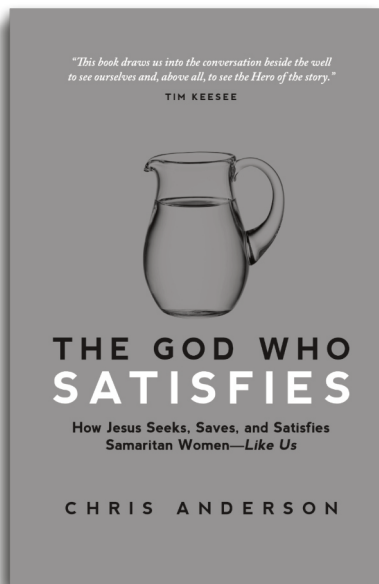
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The God Who Satisfies

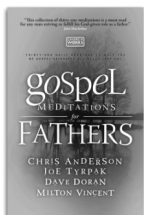
“The fields are white for harvest.” John chapter 4 is a wonderful testimony to the gospel’s power and a microcosm of what God is doing in the world. It points to answers for so many problems of our own day, such as racial prejudice, religious confusion, materialism, divorce, and sensuality. Join Chris Anderson on this study through his favorite narrative from the entire Bible, and find out how Jesus—the greatest Missionary—seeks, saves, and satisfies sinners.

“This book draws us into the conversation beside the well to see ourselves and, above all, to see the Hero of the story.”

—Tim Keese, author of *Dispatches from the Front: Stories of Gospel Advance in the World’s Difficult Places*



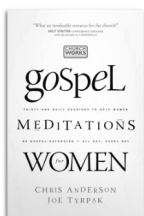
THE GOSPEL MEDITATIONS SERIES



Gospel Meditations for Fathers

“This collection of thirty-one meditations is a must-read for any man striving to fulfill his God-given role as a father. Since each reading is both biblical and practical, it equips the reader to lead family members to greater love to Christ and to God’s Word.”

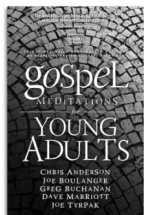
—**John MacArthur**, late pastor of Grace Community Church, Sun Valley, California, chairman of Grace to You, and author of dozens of books



Gospel Meditations for Women

“Wrestling with guilt and frustration, far too many Christian women are living below the privileges of their spiritual inheritance. This devotional beautifully highlights those unbinding messages of grace that so powerfully ignite joyful passion for Christ and holy living. What an invaluable resource!”

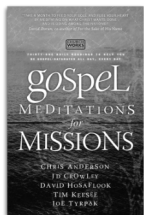
—**Holly Stratton**, women’s conference speaker



Gospel Meditations for Young Adults

“These devotionals are biblical, pastoral, succinct, readable, relevant, and relatable. More importantly, the focus is cross-centered and theological without being forced or trite. This would be a great tool to use in parenting, personal discipleship, group study, or even pastoral counseling.”

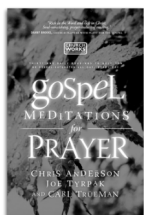
—**Voddie Baucham**, late author, president of Founders Seminary, and founding dean, African Christian University, Zambia



Gospel Meditations for Missions

“These authors define, defend, and describe biblical mission in ways that deepen both our understanding of what God is doing in the world and our desire to join Him in the doing of it! Buy it; read it; pray it; and share it.”

—**David Hesselgrave**, late author and professor emeritus of mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL



Gospel Meditations for Prayer

“Brief and biblical, these meditations are full of sharp edges. They lead us to pray as cross-bearing disciples of Christ. Yet the authors also comfort us with Christ’s perfect grace for fallen people. This devotional is an encouraging book, but one designed to stretch you.”

—**Joel Beeke**, president of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, author, and editorial director of Reformation Heritage Books

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