

Discussion Guide: World Missions

*Let us examine the Scriptures like the Bereans who "received the message with the great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."
Acts 17:11 (NIV)*

October 5, 2003: "Reaching the World for Christ" by Dr. Clive Calver, President of World Relief (website: <http://www.worldrelief.org>). Dr. Calver last spoke on the Sunday after the events of 9/11 and today he announced that we are on the verge of peace in Southern Sudan. What a contrast on the world scene.

In introducing Dr. Calver, Dale Shaw gave a brief overview of our outreach efforts at College Park Church:

- We are awakening to missions here at CPC
- We have a growing missions budget: currently 32% local and 68% foreign
- We have two Outreach Committees: Local and Foreign
- Our Global focus is on partnerships that help the church reach the church.
- Current partnerships include UETS, NEGST, World Relief, Azerbaijan, etc.

Dr. Calver shared God's vision of the worldwide church, emphasizing that in heaven there will not be an "American", "British", or "African" church, just THE Church.

Preaching from II Kings 6:15-20 for today's message, Dr. Calver gave the background for a conflict between Syria and Israel that began in ancient times and continues on today. As we, like them, look around at the conflicts of today and say, "Oh, my Lord, what shall we do?" the Lord provides us with three principles that are applicable to our lives today:

- Don't be afraid.
- Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.
- Pray that God will open your eyes so that you may see his mighty power at work.

With respect to our conflicts with the Arab world, Dr. Calver pointed out that we should not be afraid of Islam since "He who is with us is greater than he who is in the world." The Bible says 366 times that we should not be afraid. He admonished us to speak appropriately about Islam, and not out of fear. Dr. Calver also noted from the text that Elisha prayed for their eyes to be opened, and he said that our eyes need to be opened to the world at large. World Relief is "churches helping churches help the poor". He discussed how God is working in Muslim countries to open their eyes to Jesus and how the church is growing across the world. He also shared how he has seen the sad state of affairs for the church in poorer countries and how great is their need.

Towards the end of his sermon, Dr. Calver shared his experiences of traveling to Iraq to find the church in action. At one point he was brought into the home of a local family to share Christ with her family. Their message to America, is "Thank you for setting us free. You've won the war, now win the peace."

Dr. Calver's closing challenge as we departed to go out into our world:

Together, by the grace of God, let us change a little bit of this world for Jesus.

Discussion Questions

As you begin your discussion, pray that the Lord will enlighten us to the truths of his word as you read II Kings 6:15-20 together.

1. Since Flock groups are based upon 4 pillars [***ask for a volunteer in your group to name the four pillars***]. As Outreach is mentioned ask, "Why is it we find it so difficult to share the gospel of Christ, the good news of the Kingdom of God?"
2. In light of the three principles shared by Dr. Calver, what should be our response to this challenge?
3. In response to Dr. Calver's closing challenge, what can we do *individually* to take the gospel to the world...to change a little bit of this world for Jesus.
4. What could we *as a group* do to take the gospel to the world...to change a little bit of this world for Jesus.
5. Dr. Calver spoke briefly upon a Christian's proper public response to Islam. How should we view a Muslim? How does God view a Muslim? What should be our official response to Islam?
6. How does hearing about the growing church abroad and its physical struggles affect you? What can we do about it?