

Applegate Community Church

Our Philosophy of Missions (Condensed)

1. Missions exist because of the Great Commission.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:19-20).

Biblical missions are directly focused on the Great Commission, which means preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, baptizing those who believe, and teaching the whole council of God to bring about obedience to Christ in all that He commanded.

2. Missions exists to glorify God. God is greatly glorified in the redemption of sinners.

The greatest motivation for missions is a passion to see people “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev 5:9) falling and declaring, “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power” (Rev 4:11).

3. Missions will succeed as a means towards God’s decreed end.

“This gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matt 24:14)

God has decreed that men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation will be saved.

Why does the gospel need to be preached to the whole world? Because all people are born sinners and need to hear and respond to the saving message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. All who do not hear the gospel or reject it will spend eternity in hell. The missionary endeavor will succeed, by the means God has ordained (Rom 10:12-17; Matt 18:19-20; Acts 1:8). The church is God’s ordained means to take the gospel message to every people group of the earth.

4. Missions must work strategically, to accomplish God’s intended end.

The church has the strategic goal of planting churches among all people groups. Even though most people will reject the gospel, our focus remains global in planting churches in strategically targeted un-reached groups, helping those new churches to become self-governing, self-supporting, and reproducing other biblically healthy churches. It is our desire as a church to support missionaries whose purposes and beliefs match our strategic plan. “When the church has been planted in all the people groups of the earth, and the elect have been gathered in from all the ‘tribes and tongues and nations,’ then the Great Commission will be complete. Missions will be over” (John Piper)

5. Missions must be intimately connected to the local church

A. The local church is responsible for praying for our missionaries

We regularly pray for our missionaries during our worship service, and we hope our congregation will be informed and up to date on the needs of our missionaries so they can pray for them personally. Our church supported missions complete with pictures, fields of service and supporting information is available in the foyer to help sharpen our focus in prayer.

B. The local church is responsible for sending out missionaries

1. God is the supreme Agent in sending out missionaries

It was the Holy Spirit who made it clear that Paul and Barnabas were to be set apart as missionaries (Acts 13:2, 4). Their departure for that work was described as *“being sent out by the Holy Spirit.”*

2. The local church is the facilitating agent in sending out missionaries.

While the Holy Spirit was the ultimate Agent in sending out Paul and Barnabas, the church at Antioch was instrumental: *“When they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away”* (Acts 13:3). In other words, missions are done by qualified leaders that are sent out by local churches (Acts 13:1-4; Rom 10:14-15).

C. The local church is responsible for the supervision of missionaries.

“From there they sailed to Antioch, from which they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had accomplished. When they had arrived and gathered the church together, they began to report all things that God had done with them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. And they spent a long time with the disciples” (Acts 14:26-28)

Since they had been initially set apart by the church in Antioch, it was to that church that they gave an account of their missionary endeavor.

D. The local church is responsible for the support of missionaries.

Beloved, you are acting faithfully in whatever you accomplish for the brethren, and especially when they are strangers; and they have testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God. For they went out for the sake of the Name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. Therefore we ought to support such men, so that we may be fellow workers with the truth. (3 John 1:5-8)

Missions are funded sacrificially and purposefully by the members of the church.