

David Novak

How to Heighten Awareness of The Place of Missions And Evangelism In The Local Church



Theological Accents

Theologische Akzente

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Foreword

While I write about this topic I can still hear a “missiological sermon” on Heb. 10:26 from about ten years ago. The point was that if we will not speak about Jesus we will lose our salvation. After this sermon I was not motivated to share the Gospel at all, and what’s more, I felt an even greater fear of sharing the Gospel than before. This is an extreme example, but sometimes we as full time workers have a tendency to push church members to do missions. But the result of such an attitude is exactly opposite than that which we would like to see. As soon as people hear about evangelism and missions, instead being motivated, people feel frustrated.

During the last several months, I spoke with a few men who are about the same age as I am. They have to wake up about seven, at eight they leave their home going to their offices. About seven p.m. they come home, stressed from their jobs. When they come home they are glad that they have a little free time. They help to take care of the children, then they speak about necessary household things with their wives, and finally they go to bed. Sometimes some

of them go to church with the feeling that the rest of their strength is being taken away by the church. In some way this is reality for most men. Their wives are either at home with the kids or they have to work as well. Saturday is a free day where average Czech couples try to catch up on things they were not able to do during the week. Why such a strange beginning? Should I write about this in a research paper? Isn’t it too ordinary?

I think I should write about it because the when we speak about awareness of the place of missions and evangelism in the local church, we speak about concrete people who are coming to church, who have to spend about 10 hours a day in their jobs and who have many personal struggles. It is quite to be expected that missionaries or pastors will be aware of the necessity of missions but what about average church members living in the conditions I briefly described?

When we read the New Testament we see that all Christians are called to missions, that missions and evangelism is not just for full time professionals. For example, all members of the Church in Philippi were called to “shine like stars in the universe”. (Phil. 2:15) The Thes-

salonians are described as “having not only welcomed the Lord’s message but as having made it ring out in the neighboring regions”. (1 Thes.1:6,8) We can see, that it is the Church, “a community”, not pastors or evangelists only, “that visibly and effectively participates in God’s activity, just as Jesus indicated when he referred to it in metaphorical language as salt, yeast and light in the world”.¹ The problem is that since then “the Christian leadership was resymbolized in terms of professionals, technician and therapist”.² Such a situation can be dangerous for missions because church members can get the idea that missions and evangelism is first of all for professionals. But such an idea is not biblical.

Being tired from the daily struggles, church members can see the Church more as a place where they enjoy God’s word and just being together. John Stott writes that “the members of the local church (whether in imagination or in reality) are often seen sitting in a circle facing each other”. However, Stott sees a certain danger in such a situation. “Although legitimate, however, ‘meeting in the circle’ is also dangerous. For whenever we turn inwards towards one another, we turned our backs on the world.”³ If this happens, then “the Church” writes McGavran “is a religious club, it is not the Church of Jesus Christ”.⁴

The goal of this essay is not to analyze reasons why church members are not sometimes aware of the importance of missions and evangelization but to show

several ways how to heighten awareness of the place of missions among them.

The logic of love

A. Kirk writes about “The logic of love”. Then he continues, claiming: “Divine love is the very opposite of narcissism. It is the passion which wishes the very highest and best for the other and is willing to sacrifice all that this might be achieved. Love is centrifugal – it always tends outwards from its centre.”⁵ L. Newbigin in his book “The Open Secret” describes missions as “Love in Action”.⁶ We can develop great mission theories, great plans and visions but without love we will never be able to reach the world. Without love towards the world we can achieve certain techniques but our hearts will be gone. “The Gospel must always be spoken and interpreted in love. It is never spoken for the purpose of political control or domination. In this effort to speak the truth in love, Scripture itself provides us a reliable guide.”⁷ Sometimes I am amazed at how much time missionaries are taught how to share the Gospel and how little time is spend on their inward motivations – why share the Gospel. If they come through training which emphasizes techniques, they tend to use the same training with people in the church. Such a situation leads to the conclusion that mission is first of all a matter of technique. W. Schenk claims:

“In some circles evangelism has become synonymous with certain methods and techniques – evangelistic meetings,

evangelistic methods, evangelistic literature. This variety has made it difficult to enter deeply and empathetically into another culture.”⁸ (I would add, into another human heart).

Another problem with love is to separate sin from those we want to reach. Ross Rohde shows the example:

“Two moral issues”, claims Rohde “which are currently important to most expressions of the Christian faith are homosexuality and abortion. Doctrinally, most Christians would affirm their love of those who practice these lifestyles, while expressing abhorrence for the practice itself. Often though, we are perceived by outsiders as hating both of these lifestyles and those who practice these lifestyles.”⁹

Evangelical churches in my country are mostly attended by middle-class, sometimes by upper class people. There are almost no people from the lower class people or people from the fringes of the society. We have “special organizations” taking care of these people. From the outside, it looks that these organizations are for “big sinners” while the Church is for “the average or little sinners”. But reading the Gospel, we see that the people surrounding Jesus were very often from the third group. I know that one of the reasons for this reality is that in many cases, to take care for of alcoholics, prostitutes, single mothers and others, specialists are needed. But at the same time I have to ask whether another reason for this situation is not our problem with accepting of the sin-

ners. Writing about this, it is very interesting to note that NO foreign evangelical mission organization working in the Czech Republic is targeting the lower class people.

R. Southwell, a sixteenth-century Roman Catholic priest, wrote: ‘Not when I breathe, but when I love, I live.’ He was probably echoing Augustine’s remark that the soul lives where it loves, not where it exists.¹⁰

My first point is to emphasize to the church members, and to be a clear example of, the close connection between missions and love. To help them to “weep for the lost world”. I see this as the starting point.

Every member is missionary

“Ana thinks that her job as a nurse is bad because she isn’t serving God „full-time.“ Jose wants to leave the business world for the same reason. Many Christians today want to make their lives count for the cause of Christ, yet they don’t realize that their lives can count – everyday. They don’t realize the power of a profession. Jesus knew the power of a profession when He said, „You are the light of the world.”¹¹

Probably Ana and Jose are aware that they should go to Church, pray, read the Bible. They are definitely aware of the importance of sharing the Gospel, but there is not such a strong awareness that each of them is called to share the Gospel right in the place where they are. They are in places where most mis-

sionaries or evangelists will never have an opportunity to be. Sometimes missionaries have to spend a lot of energy just to be with non-Christians. They have to actively build up some bridges connecting them with the non-Christians' world. This is not the case of church members; most of them have to be with non-Christians because of their profession. It is a great opportunity for personal evangelism.

*"Personal evangelism" writes J. Stott, "has had impeccable biblical precedents. It is still our duty, when the opportunity is given and in a spirit of humility, to share Christ with those of our relatives, friends, neighbors and colleagues who do not yet know him."*¹²

There are very interesting statistics on the growth of Christian missionary and service agencies. D. Barrett indicates that "there were over thirteen times as many Christian service agencies in 1986 than there were in 1900. In 2000 there were sixteen times as many (24 000 as compared to 19 700). The number of mission agencies increased from 600 in 1900 to 4800 in the year 2000."¹³ These statistics show us that there are more and more full time Christian workers and missionaries, which is great. But at the same time it can lead to the wrong conclusion that only those people are responsible for reaching the world. Nevertheless, "in the world", writes L.Luzbetac, "the mission of the Church is to be the vox Dei in matters of faith and morals, in matters of love and justice, in matters of peace, reconciliation and salvation."¹⁴ When

Luzbetac writes the Church he does not mean just full time church workers, but all members of the Church. Or saying in other words "proclaiming the Gospel is the responsibility of all Christians, it is more than the vocation option for a selected minority".¹⁵ In a concrete situation, it means emphasizing that church members going to their jobs or schools, doing their daily activities at any place are called to be vox Dei. A very interesting example of how a layman can be used by God is the well-known evangelist Dwight L. Moody.

*"About 130 years ago a religion editor for a Chicago paper noted the irony that "Moody – untrained and unschooled – knows how to handle a Bible. It is a singular fact that with all our theological seminaries and learned treatises on homiletics, it should fall to the lot of laymen to teach the ministries of this generation how to preach the word." Many people tried to understand the secret of Moody's power. "Moody frequently pointed to John 3:30 and 2 Chronicles 16:9 but for many observers this was too simplistic. To them there had to be special techniques that can be observed, explained and then taught to others"."*¹⁶

This quote does not mean at all that we should underestimate missions or theological education (Moody himself started several theological schools to train missionaries and pastors). I simply want to show that laymen working daily in their professional jobs are called to do missions, and that God can use them in a mighty way. But they need

to be aware of this appeal. But there is still question how to help to layman to see themselves as missionaries. I'd like to offer three possibilities.

To teach it. Several weeks ago I did a huge survey among church members (I asked one-tenth of all of our denomination). One of the questions was: "What, do you think, is the most powerful area of your local church?" Most often people (38%) answered: "Preaching". In spite of many postmodern theories about the meaningless of the word, it is still very important what is preached – at least in my denomination's perspective. That is why I see it as very important to preach and teach the idea that "every member is a missionary". To encourage people to share the Gospel in the place where they are.

To see bridges, not obstacles. In 1993 I started an evangelistic sport ministry in the Czech Republic. Since that time some athletes came to Christ and I asked them to help me. Now there are 20 layman athletes doing sport ministry with me. When I asked them why they do it, they answered me that it is very natural for them. Before their conversion they spent a lot of time among athletes. They still have many contacts, good relationships and they feel very comfortable among athletes. Their testimony is much more acceptable for athletes than, for example, mine. When they became Christians some people in the Church asked me what these athletes will do on Sunday (most competitions are on Sunday). Should they stop competing? I spent a lot of time dealing

with this question. Finally I encouraged these athletes to participate in competitions, but in the same time to see the competitions as a mission field. Or, in other words, to stay where they are and to be salt and light there. But I must add – I was in close relationship with them, talking with them about their spiritual lives. Through this example I realized that we should encourage people to see the place where they are as a bridge rather than an obstacle for sharing the Gospel. For example, in my local church we told high school teachers that they are our missionaries, we are praying for them and we encourage them to continue in their difficult job. They are very encouraged by this attitude. By their teaching (or ministry?) several students have already become Christians.

To show the power of friendship. The last point to emphasize is the power of "friendship evangelism". Not every church member is able to have an evangelistic talk, but most of them are able to have relationships or friendships with non-Christians. Two years ago I did another survey, asking the following question: "What was the context of your conversion?" The people from non-Christian backgrounds (52%) claimed relationships as the most important context – almost 40% (they choose from eight possibilities). I think that this result does not need any explanation, but I do see one important point here: We should help church members to realize that their time with non-Christians is not wasted time, even

when they do not share the Gospel during every conversation

Training and inspiration

My attitude toward missions was changed after three weeks of a short term mission outreach in Amsterdam and after translating for an evangelist in the streets of Prague. After these two experiences, my attitude towards missions was changed. The main reason was that I saw someone do missions. Before this, I had heard many times about the necessity of sharing the Good News, but it had little influence on me. Very often church goers are not aware of the importance of mission because they do not see some living examples. They just hear how important it is to share the Gospel. In the book “Mission Focus”, W. Shenk writes about the importance of training for missions.¹⁷ He writes that the goal of such training will be to rise up “long term highly skilled specialists”. I agree with that, but I miss the same emphasis to train church members. Writing about this problem, I can almost hear the discussion in my church concerning the role of missionaries. A certain tension is clear from the following quote:

“In Christian circles the word „Missionary“ means somebody who is doing mission especially evangelism among non-Christians. But we can hear this word to be used in different meaning. In our post-communist countries we can meet many so called missionaries coming into our country as experts. In

our context the word „expert“ means someone who is really very experienced in theory and practice of some ministry and particular work. We find very offensive to discover that some missionary comes to our country as an expert, let's say, in church planting but he has never planted a church before. We have met many so-called experts who just know some theory and teach their expertise as a methodology without knowing real insight of particular ministry. Many national leaders throughout the years became almost angry hearing some missionary saying: „We have ‚know – how‘ and you have people to do it! But there are no functioning examples, no models of that ministry in our context. We miss more doers, servants modeling Christ's like ministry in church planting, evangelism, counseling, social work etc...“¹⁸

The core of the problem is that the goal of many missionaries working in the Czech Republic is “to equip people in the Church to do missions”. But Czechs expect that they will first of all do missions, that they will become “living models”. Jerry Solomon writes about three educational sources: what is seen, heard and read. Then he claims a well-known fact that, “since a large percentage of people spend an enormous amount of time viewing television, movies, magazines, and other media, what we see is a major educational element.”¹⁹ People need to experience, to see that missions and evangelism are not just some theological constructs. A very good example is Paul. I'm sure

that a lot of the things Timothy, Silas, Luke and others did, not because they used Paul's letters as a kind of "missions manuals", but first of all because they just copied Paul.

One of the main differences between the contemporary and past world is access to information. Today it is not such a big problem to get information (for example about missions) the problem is to put that information into practice (to do missions). I'm afraid that if people in the Church will not see missions in practice, they will not be motivated to do it. I'd like to show some possibilities how to train and inspire Church members to do mission.

Teaching by example. Writing above about the sport ministry, I would like to add one more experience. When some of my friends became Christians, they started to go to sport camps with me trying to share the Gospel with their friends. They had no missiological education; they just observed what I and my team did. I was amazed how quickly they learned to share the Gospel. After one year they did the same as my team and I. They made mistakes, but in the same time they took big steps forward. I realized that one of the best kinds of training is when full-time workers invite laymen to join their mission or take part in projects.

Teaching by feedback. The second "transition step" should be dialog or feedback. In some ways, taking the first step without this one can be dangerous. The problem is that people would see just the outward forms without a deeper

understanding of why I did what I did. They will not understand why I used certain words, acts or even techniques. Using a biblical example, they will only see that Paul circumcised Timothy. Without a broader context, their conclusion could be: "If he did it (it does not matter whether it is circumcision, drinking beer or certain actions) we should do it as well". But it would be a step backward, because they would see the outward forms as some "magic key" to human hearts.

Teaching in the classroom. The last sentence of the paragraph above shows why there must be this last step – theoretical preparation as reflection on our practical steps or, using Luzbetac's words: "utilization of human knowledge and skills". Firstly it means to show to church members what is behind what they see; why we do what we do. Even though a living example is very important, without theory there is a danger that they will only thoughtlessly repeat what they see. The difference between this step and the step above is that feedback is a reaction to certain, very concrete situations. By this step I mean a broader observation and overview of what missions is. The second part is the theoretical development of the practical skills. To a certain extent, the same sociological laws apply in missions as in any other area of human activity. This means that before a person does something for the first time, he or she does it in the class. "Our theological preamble professes at the same time a deep appreciation of the contribution" writes

Luzbetac, “that human knowledge and skill can make toward more effective mission policies and practices. Whole being certainly demands the utilization of human knowledge and skills.”²⁰

The relation of the Bible and missions

“If the mission of the church is to be fruitful in the world today it needs to have a clear foundation, a basis we can rely on.”²¹ This basis is Scripture. People in the Church need to see that “God is a sending God and that mission comes right out of his heart.”²² It seems clear, and I myself have seen many books and manuals emphasizing the importance of missions. Many authors strongly claim that their proofs come out of the Bible. Sometimes there was the following methodology: a challenge to do missions or some theological proofs of missions, and then a list of Bible proof-verses. But showing the missionary character of God and the relation of the Bible and missions, we have to be aware of one problem of this method: as J. Verkyul notes:

*“In the past the usual method was to pull a series of proof-texts out of the Old and New Testament and then to consider the task accomplished. But more recently biblical scholars have taught us the importance of reading these texts in the context of paying due regard to the various nuances...One must consider the very structure of the whole biblical message.”*²³

The list of Biblical proof-texts reminds me of books of aphorisms. They are interesting, sometimes challenging but they are not in context. I’d like to show an example of what I write by using the Christian bestseller “Natural Church Development”. Lois Y. Barrett makes a very interesting observation:

*“Listed in the right-hand column of Table 1 are Schwarz’s eight indicators of quality. All of these are good things, for the most part. But are they sufficient? In Natural Church Development, Schwarz says that these eight characteristics of the church came from empirical research, observing nature, and studying Scripture (NCD, 13). But in the Implementation Guide, it becomes clear that the primary source of seven of these eight qualities was church growth literature.”*²⁴

Barrett writes about church, but the same can happen with evangelism and mission. The primary source will be either Christian or even secular (sociological, anthropological, business) literature, and proof-text Bible verses will support what we have already decided to say. Each of the eight Schwarz characteristics is improved by several Bible verses, but the problem is that the Bible is not primary source of his research.

How can it happen? “Without many people realizing it, the question had changed. Instead of asking the question, „What are the marks of the true church?“, now many people were asking, „What are the marks of the successful church or the growing church?“ Now, in the modern era, the marks became not

New Testament images and metaphors of peoplehood or creedal statements about the nature of the church but principles for being successful. The big question had changed from who or what to how.”²⁵ The same can happen with missions. Without being rooted in all of the Bible, we will be rooted in the secular context with the question: “What are the marks of successful missions?” We have to be aware that success in missions does not necessary mean that we are doing God’s will. After the criticism of Schwarz the question remains: “How the Scripture should be read missional, so that it produces a biblical awareness of mission in the church?” I would like to show three ideas.

From principles to methods. “The New Testament is largely silent on methods of church growth. It is not the case that the early followers of Jesus were not interested in the growth of the church. They were – and passionately so – even if they had little choice in the matter. Acts suggests that numerical growth largely overwhelmed them. Apparently they needed to spend little time strategizing and maybe even less time counting. What is particularly opaque is how „ordinary“ church members fit into the picture of this growth.”²⁶ First I would teach Church members mission principles. What it concretely means? For example I would use some New Testament images of the Church²⁷:

New Order images: Reign of God, New creation, New humanity.

Peoplehood images: People of God, Family, Holy nation, Flock.

Transformation images: Salt, light, city, Spiritual house, Witnessing community.

I would take these images asking people where they see connection between the call to mission and, for example, salt, the Holy nation, the Reign of God. I do not think that all these images have a direct connection with missions, but many of them have. I see it as important for people to realize it.

Sending God in Old Testament. There are “four motifs in the Old Testament which form the indispensable basis for the New Testament call to the church to engage in worldwide mission work: the universal motif, the motif of rescue and saving, the missionary motif and the antagonistic motif.”²⁸ It is beyond the scope of this essay to write about each of these four points, but generally we see the emphasis that God is God of all mankind, who restores his liberating Lordship over the entire world; the election of Israel involves a duty to witness to other nations; and finally, that God is wrestling against powers which oppose his saving, universal and gracious authority.

Sending God in New Testament. There is much missions material in the New Testament, but I would choose two areas: First – Jesus, the Savior of the World. Very often we hear that Jesus is MY Savior. There is a strong stress on individual salvation. Because of this emphasis, people can easily forgot that Jesus came also for their neighbors and friends. Verkiul writes that “Jesus is marching forward to announce that

God has concern for the whole world.”²⁹ One of the key hermeneutical principles is to study who the author was. We know that most of the NT books were written by Paul. It is very important to add that Paul was the first of all missionaries. His theology was formed by his mission. I see that it is a strong reason to read the New Testament under a “missions lens” and to teach it to others. Then we can think about methods. The opposite way is wrong.

To help understand the culture

Talking about the culture, the Church has been found between two extremes. One is agreement – which means that culture is idealized by the Church. The second extreme is opposition – the Church denies and rejects culture. Another view is described by A. Kirk. He writes that

*“a heightened awareness of the benefit and harm of cultural identity is fundamental for Christians seeking to live according to the Gospel: their attitude to cultural and ethnic difference may be either a positive or negative witness to Jesus Christ.”*³⁰

One of the biggest cultural misunderstandings penetrating through all history of the Church is the “strong tendency to accept implicitly a dualistic understanding and practice of the Gospel.”³¹ Throughout Church history we see a tendency to divide our world into the spiritual or higher world and non-spiritual or lower world, between

“normal life” and “ministry”, between “Sunday” and “the rest of the week”. Unfortunately, Christians have a tendency to label “non-spiritual” those things which contemporary culture likes. But such a situation leads toward the separation of Christians from the non-Christians’ world and culture. Our mission becomes, in that case, more like science-fiction; one separated culture seeking to attract another culture. The Bible has a different type of separation. It is between the realm of Sin and God’s kingdom. Our culture itself is not sin. Most human deeds are not sinful – if done under God’s leadership. Work, sex, money, food, sport, free time, study, career and thousands of other areas people are living in are neutral. Our first question must be whether they are done according to God’s will or not. Our problem is that some of these areas which are part of the culture we have a priory condemned. If this happens, people in the church will be so afraid of being touched by the “sinful world” (which in reality means contemporary culture), that they will be more and more living in separation and missions will become more and more just a theoretical issue. Or another extreme is that we lose control over some of these areas. If this happens, the Church loses its saltiness. But the problem here is not ... money, sex, job, sport, music or study. It is our own failure.

Another possible viewpoint is to bring God’s view into the world where people live, instead of ignoring the culture of the people we are bringing the Gospel

to. If our world is God's creation, then all that He has created is good. "Francis A. Schaeffer, noted lecturer and author from L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland, once said if he had only one hour to share the gospel with a person, he would spend the first forty-five minutes finding out what the person believed about God and the last fifteen minutes presenting Christ from that basis."³² Schaeffer's point is that culture can help to communicate how people think and what their needs are. Because of that, we should help church members to see culture as a certain kind of language, mediating the reality we want to share.

Every reality needs to be in some way communicated. In English as well as in Czech communications (plural) means the roads, railways, telephone lines between places or radio, TV³³. The idea is that communication does not mean just saying something, it means connecting something, someone or even to have something in common. Because of that, we should ask a "missiological question": "When we try to share the Gospel, do we start this connection in the sense of the word communication?" One of the most common areas we share with the non-Christian world is culture.

Here are some practical points how to use the culture as a bridge.

Culture as a bridge. One week ago I organized a meeting for more than 1000 young Christians. During one afternoon they could choose among several programs. For example: to spend two hours in worship, to pray for the world, to participate in "talent night" or

to go and see the film *Matrix*. Almost half of them decided to see *Matrix*. To be honest, I would prefer to see them at a prayer meeting, but their choice was to see *Matrix*. Finally I decided to use this movie as a tool. After the movie I talked 20 minutes about *Matrix* and about using it in missions. Personally I would not choose to go to the cinema to see this movie. But for many young people it is a well-known movie, probably because it fits into their culture. One attitude can be to point out the stupidity of such a movie or the sinfulness of contemporary culture. Another attitude is to think about it, to compare it with the contemporary world, and finally to look to see whether there is not some need or area into which we can bring Christian answers (in *Matrix* it can be double reality, waiting for a deliverer, the realm of the evil, power of ideas and so on). Here is one of the comments from M. Frost: "Those of us who have, like Neo, searched out the truth and discovered the reality revealed in Jesus cannot live as though we don't care about injustice."³⁴ Frost uses *Matrix* as a bridge for explaining some Christian ideas.

Culture as an explanation of the desire for God. The second, more general principle is to help church members to see one of the important aspects of every human culture. Under the surface of every culture is more or less an explanation of the human desire for God. In many songs we hear the words love, justice, desire; in architecture we can see the human desire for beauty and

eternity; in many secular books we read about the punishment of evil, and so on. C. S. Lewis called it “drops of grace”³⁵. For missiologists it means a challenge. First, to help church members to see these drops. Second, to help them bring Christians answers into them.

Reflection of contemporary culture. One very practical step can be sharing with other Christians from time to time about contemporary culture, to share what they see behind the surface, to try to bring Christians answers there and finally to bring these answers to their non-Christian friends. As a philosophy teacher, I like to use existentialistic literature. Sometimes I have an opportunity to speak at secular schools. I read something, for example from Camus or Sartre, about their pessimistic attitudes and then I ask students: “Why shouldn’t we have the same conclusions? What is the basis for your optimism?” Or sometimes I take some well-known painting, for example “Where we are coming from, who we are, where we are going?” (at the University I did some study of art). Then I speak about some details from this painting and from the life of the painter who painted it (For example when Gauguin finished this painting he tried to commit suicide. My question is: “How can someone honestly live without answers to these three questions?”). Finally I discuss with students what their answers would be like. Talking about this, I do not want to make students frustrated. I simply try to help them to be consistent in their thinking. For example to be consistent with the

idea that there is no God. If they see that they are not able to be consistent with such an idea, then I try to encourage them to search.

Conclusion

“Don’t think church, think mission! I don’t know how many times I have used that phrase with my students” writes M. Frost. Then he continues: “Stop thinking conventionally about how to do church, as if there is some presupposed purpose for church in the contemporary scene here in Australia. If many, many Australians don’t see any great usefulness, far less relevance, for the church today, how can they see churches as anything but anachronistic and quaint? Start thinking mission. Start thinking in a missions-to-the-first-world kind of way. Start thinking of the church in Australia as an uninvited, intrusive missionary movement in an uninterested, sometimes even hostile, pagan land.”³⁶ Frost is writing about Australia, but we could apply it into all of Western Europe. With sadness we have to admit that Western Europe is a pagan continent. Living in such a reality, we have first to ask ourselves and then people in the Church if we really see missions and evangelization as the most important task of the Church. To accomplish this we have to love the people we want to share the Gospel with. We have to encourage people to see their professions as an evangelistic field, to inspire them to do missions and evangelism first of all by our living example, to help

them to see the culture they are living in as a bridge towards non-Christians and finally to be rooted in a good field, that is, in the Scriptures. I see that these five areas are necessary to heighten awareness of the place of missions among church members.

Annotation

Anmerkungen

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