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**What is a Missionary?**

**By** [**Oswald Chambers**](https://utmost.org/oswald-chambers-bio)

**Jesus said to them again, "…As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." —**[**John 20:21**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=John+20%3A21)

**A missionary is someone sent by Jesus Christ just as He was sent by God. The great controlling factor is not the needs of people, but the command of Jesus. The source of our inspiration in our service for God is behind us, not ahead of us. The tendency today is to put the inspiration out in front— to sweep everything together in front of us and make it conform to our definition of success. But in the New Testament the inspiration is put behind us, and is the Lord Jesus Himself. The goal is to be true to Him— to carry out *His* plans.**

**Personal attachment to the Lord Jesus and to His perspective is the one thing that must not be overlooked. In missionary work the great danger is that God’s call will be replaced by the needs of the people, to the point that human sympathy for those needs will absolutely overwhelm the meaning of being sent by Jesus. The needs are so enormous, and the conditions so difficult, that every power of the mind falters and fails. We tend to forget that the one great reason underneath all missionary work is not primarily the elevation of the people, their education, nor their needs, but is first and foremost the command of Jesus Christ— “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations…” (**[**Matthew 28:19**](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+28:19)**).**

**When looking back on the lives of men and women of God, the tendency is to say, “What wonderfully keen and intelligent wisdom they had, and how perfectly they understood all that God wanted!” But the keen and intelligent mind behind them was the mind of God, not human wisdom at all. We give credit to human wisdom when we should give credit to the divine guidance of God being exhibited through childlike people who were “foolish” enough to trust God’s wisdom and His supernatural equipment.**