

Fill Our Vision

More of our heart, dear Lord, we'd give You now;
 Even more ground to You, Lord, we'd allow.
 All that distracts us we'd despise,
 All that draws away our eyes—
 Lord, do fill our vision,
 'Til the Morning Star is risen!

~ Unknown

What Do You See?

"Only those who can see the invisible can do the impossible."

~ Frank L. Gaines

LOOK AT THE FIELDS ...

This week we'd like to share with you an article written by Wayne M. Warner from Battle Creek, Michigan published in the Wesleyan Life Magazine

BEHOLD, I say to you," Jesus announced to His disciples, "lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!" (John 4:35 NKJV).

The current age is not the only one that has presented challenges to evangelism. The culture of the first century posed many obstacles to the spread of the gospel, yet Jesus modeled a lifestyle of evangelism for His disciples and trained them extensively to spread the good news. Rather than seeing our culture as a worst-case scenario for evangelism, we should take heart from these encouraging words the Lord gave to His disciples. We live in a world of possibilities!

Confirmation of Jesus' message and ministry came when He appeared to His bewildered disciples after they had fled the empty tomb. As their understanding unfolded, they began to witness in Jerusalem of the risen Christ. The electrifying story soon filtered throughout Judea and Samaria, spreading across the known world. Today we are called to become evangelists, bearers of this good news. As evangelists, we emphasize salvation by faith in Christ's atoning death on the cross. Evangelism is any serious effort we make at winning others to Christ. We cannot be truly Christian without becoming evangelists, or practitioners of evangelism.

If the world is to be won for Christ in this generation, we will need to make evangelism our first priority. Every congregation will need measurable strategies for reaching others with the gospel and will need to evaluate the performance of its pastoral staff and members as evangelists. That may require some difficult decisions as we refuse to be satisfied with church ministries that do not include outreach. When a congregation provides at least one outreach worker for every nine workers who serve existing members, it practices good stewardship. To be successful at evangelism, a congregation must set evangelism goals, and then mobilize members to meet them. Staff members multiply their effectiveness by becoming equippers.

Many congregations are at a plateau or declining. Yet Jesus' words remind us that there is work to do. Wherever there are people to be reached, the church should be growing. Christ's words challenge us to become more productive as evangelists, bearers of His good news. None of us is excused from participating in the enterprise of evangelism. The need is too great. Look at the fields—they are already white for harvest.

PLUG-IN Make a Difference! *The fields are indeed ripe for harvest. One of the ways you can get personally involved in evangelism is to participate in our short-term mission trips to Africa. We are now accepting applications for the Summer 2006 Mission trips to Uganda, Nigeria, Benin Republic and Sudan. The trips are scheduled for two weeks beginning July 15, 2006. The deadline for submission of applications is February 28, 2006. If you would like to receive an application form, please send an email to info@acfmissions.org with your mailing address. From our experience, we can assure you that the mission trip is more for you than for the people you will be ministering to in Africa. The long-term benefits are limitless, some of which are:*

- *Becoming a better disciple of Jesus Christ with a*



global perspective;

- *Seeing afresh, God's love for a lost world and His compassion for the most vulnerable;*
- *Having an opportunity to exercise your spiritual gifts, perhaps in a way you've never done before;*
- *Having a deeper understanding of what missions is all about;*
- *Returning home with a stronger passion to be an advocate for missions in your church community;*
- *Becoming a more faithful "giver" and "pray-er" for missions; and*
- *Impacting your local church and/or ACF Chapter – knowing what a difference you can make!*

Therefore please prayerfully consider going on a mission trip this year. Have a blessed New Year!

"We can give without loving, but we cannot love without giving."

- Alexander. Duff