

History of Modern Protestant Missions

Sources

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I. Launching the Work

A. Moravian Pioneers (18th cent.)

1. “Embedded” missionaries, “tent makers”
2. In 10 years reached 5 continents and 28 countries
3. Inspired 19th-century outreach

B. “The Great Century” (19th century)

1. Era of amazing international expansion
2. Christianity becomes a worldwide religion

C. William Carey: “Father of Modern Missions”

1. Baptist shoemaker inspired by Isa. 54:2-3
2. “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.”
3. Work at Serampore, India (Danish): translation, evangelism, schools
4. Importance (González, 422-24)
 - a. A pioneer who captured the public attention → created a missions *movement*
 - b. Formed Baptist Missionary Society—pattern of special missions organizations
 - c. Vision: Aimed at evangelizing a whole country → Led to a *global* vision

D. American Contribution

1. Outgrowth of Second Great Awakening (González, 326)
 - a. “Haystack Prayer Meeting” at Williams College
 - b. Samuel Mills and founding of ABCFM (Congregationalist)
2. Adoniram Judson & Luther Rice
 - a. Would-be ABCFM missionaries to India → became Baptist
 - b. Judson: Pioneer work in Burma
 - c. Rice: Organized Baptists in USA

II. The Imperialist Push, 1871-1914

A. Christianity & Imperialism

1. Imperialism = extension of Western empires
2. Missionaries often accused of being “agents of imperialism”
3. Missionaries & colonizers sometimes cooperated & sometimes were at odds (e.g., Carey & Judson vs. British East India Co.)
4. Missionaries sometimes guilty of paternalism (because nationals were non-Christian, not inferior) but fought exploitation (e.g., Hiram Bingham in Hawaii)
5. Typified by David Livingstone (explorer, missionary, opponent of slave trade)

B. Strong stress on “civilizing” converts

1. “Civilizing” seen as prerequisite to evangelism
2. View of Europe & North America as “Christian” & “civilized”
3. Challenge for missions: distinguishing the truly Christian from the cultural

III. Surge of Evangelistic Missions

A. Student Volunteer Movement (SVM)

1. Began at D. L. Moody's Northfield Bible Conference (1886)
2. Motto: "The evangelization of the world in this generation."
 - a. Evangelization = preaching of gospel, not results
 - b. Stressed evangelizing over civilizing
3. Credited w/ sending 20,000 missionaries to the field
 - a. Inspired several famous missionaries, notably C. T. Studd
 - b. Leader John R. Mott (layman) → took SVM into ecumenical movement to further "world evangelism"

B. Rise of "Faith Missions"

1. Definition
 - a. Not denominationally supported
 - b. Missionaries went to the field by faith w/o support
 - c. Characterized by zealous evangelism (not civilizing)
2. J. Hudson Taylor & China Inland Mission
 - a. Pioneer of faith missions
 - b. Also sought to adapt to customs of the people
3. Christian and Missionary Alliance
 - a. Most important of faith missions
 - b. Founded in 1887 by A. B. Simpson
 - c. Eventually became a denomination
4. Characteristics
 - a. Great reliance on Bible institutes/Bible college grads
 - b. A truly high cost
 - c. Developed into independent boards as clearinghouses

C. Three-self Methodology

1. Developed by Henry Venn
2. Principles: Form indigenous churches that are ...
 - a. Self-supporting
 - b. Self-governing
 - c. Self-extending
3. An important missionary theory
4. Success story: Korea

IV. Challenges of the 20th and 21st Centuries

A. Collapse of imperialism & "Postcolonialism"

1. End of empires results in both resentment & loss of protection
2. Postcolonialism
 - a. Emphasis on effects of colonialism—often negative
 - b. Often hostile analysis of religious impact

B. Rise of Liberalism/Modernism

1. Reduced missions to humanitarianism
2. Source of contention in Fundamentalist-Modernist Controversy

C. Contextualization & Multiculturalism

1. Attempts to adapt Christianity to the culture
2. Often presume the equality of all cultures

- D. Powerful anti-mission ideologies
 - 1. Communism & Cold War
 - 2. Militant Islam
- E. Major Meetings
 - 1. Edinburgh Missionary Conference (1910)
 - a. Aimed to create a new impetus for missions
 - b. Sought to promote unity as a means to efficiency
 - c. Contributed to rise of ecumenical movement
 - 2. Lausanne Conference for World Evangelism (1974)
 - a. Inspired by Billy Graham
 - b. Affirmed a conservative doctrinal stance
 - c. Goals
 - 1) Represent non-Western world as well
 - 2) Unite all evangelicals for world evangelism
 - 3) Called for greater social involvement
 - 4) Call for missions *from* all parts of the globe