

Editorial Reflections

Ten Premises

Only once every 25 years do the editors of *IJFM* come to the end of a 25th year of publication. How best can we look back and look ahead at the end of our first quarter of a century?

Ten premises come to mind:

1. The “frontiers” of which we speak are neither an optional luxury nor an unwonted burden. They are the very essence of God’s call upon our lives.
2. This truth is very widely understood. Most people think of Christianity as merely an expanding global religion of personal redemption.
3. They quote just part of Matt 16:18, “I will build my church.” For them it is good enough to add members from all the peoples of the world.
4. But in Matt 16:18 Jesus adds, AND! (When was AND so important?) The purpose of the church is to build itself AND “it will (then) beat down the doors of the Kingdom of Darkness.”
5. Building the Church in both number and depth is self-defeating if the larger purpose of God’s calling is ignored. It is like recruiting soldiers for a non-existent war.
6. Why self-defeating? The self-serving church may expand by attracting people interested in their own salvation, but if it only serves itself it also crumbles and self-destructs. Isn’t this what happened to Italy, France, England? The church is now crumbling globally (as well as expanding), like salt losing its savor. This is true even on the “mission field,” even where high percentages are believers. For example, Nagaland in India, or Central African republic, 97% and 70% “Christian” respectively, yet are also known to be exceedingly corrupt.
7. We often rejoice over the global gains of the Church. There is another side! Christianity is failing in its larger mission and crumbling in numbers.
8. We are to be salt and light in this world. That means not just adding members to the Church but glorifying God by our good deeds (Matt 5:16). We are saved by the infusion of God’s power (grace) into our

lives precisely so that we can do those good deeds (Eph 2:8-10).

9. What kind of a Christ are we to follow? “The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the Devil” (1 Jn 3:8).
10. If we “Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples” (Psa. 96:3), we will then build the Church on a solid foundation that will not crumble. **IJFM**

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