

January 29, 2018

By Robert J. Tamasy

THE MISSION FIELD – CLOSER THAN YOU THINK

Have you ever been to the mission field? Let me warn you: that's a bit of a trick question. For most of us, when we hear "mission field," we think of traveling to a distant land where an unfamiliar language is spoken in a culture dramatically different from our own. In the traditional sense, that is true. But have you ever considered that the mission field might be down the street – or just outside your work space?

For more than 25 years, my friend Ken has led a ministry to business owners and CEOs, offering them a place to meet for sharing common challenges, needs and problems. Whenever a new member joined one of the groups, Ken gives them a sign, suggesting they post it at the top of their office door, on the inside, serving as a daily reminder. The sign reads, "You are now entering the mission field."

This is fitting because when Jesus made the command we commonly refer to as the Great Commission – "*go and make disciples of all nations*" (*Matthew 28:19*) – He did not say we should not include the country, city, or community in which we live. In a practical sense, if we are unable to have an eternal impact where we presently are, how can we have an impact where we are not?

For most of my 10 years as a newspaper editor, I was not a follower of Jesus. And even after committing my life to Him, I lacked the understanding of how to effectively talk with others about my faith and help other believers begin to grow spiritually. It was only after I became involved with CBMC – and started to interact with dedicated, mature Christ followers – that I realized that telling others about Him was not a job restricted to the clergy and professional missionaries.

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Here are some teachings from the Bible to confirm that whatever we do, wherever we go, we already are on the “mission field”:

For some, we are the only “Jesus” they will see. In many parts of the world, we live in secularized, post-Christian cultures. Many people – especially business and professional people – will not consider entering a house of worship, even if they have spiritual questions. We might be the ones God wants to use to provide the answers they seek. Jesus told His followers, *“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden” (John 5:14). He also said, “let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).*

We can show the reality of Christ by how we conduct ourselves at work. A friend told me of the poor work ethic and low standards he observes within his industry. I suggested this offers a perfect opportunity to separate his company – and its values – from his competitors. *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17). The apostle Paul also exhorted believers in the city of Corinth, “So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (1 Corinthians 10:31).*

So, the next time you think about going to the mission field, recognize you are already there! You do not even need to pack a suitcase.

Ken © 2018. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace*; *Tufting Legacies*; coauthored with David A. Stoddard, *The Heart of Mentoring*, and edited numerous other books, including *Advancing Through Adversity* by Mike Landry. Bob's website is www.bobtamasy-readywriterink.com, and his biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

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Reflection/Discussion Question

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the term “mission field”?
2. Have you ever gone to what we typically consider the mission field – meaning traveling to another country or culture – even on a short-term basis? If so, what was that experience like for you?
3. How does the distant mission field – across an ocean, or at least on the other side of a national border – differ from the “mission field” we are describing here, in your own city, on the next street, or even outside your own working space?
4. If you consider that whatever you do, wherever you go throughout your work day, “you are now entering the mission field,” does your perspective change about how to approach your job – and the people you encounter along the way? Why or why not?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23-24, 4:5-6; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 1 Peter 3:15-16

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