

ONE GOD, ONE COMMUNITY, ONE MISSION

Village Missions Sunday - 2014

Introduction:

My message will be brief this morning!

Sixty six years ago, Village Missions was founded as a response to the need for the gospel in small, out-of-the-way places in rural America. Twenty years later the first Village Missionaries in Canada were sent to Willow River, BC. One by one, new missionary pastors joined the work and new communities were added. Each one was and is important.

This morning, as we look for a few minutes at the ministry of Village Missions, our theme is, "The Value of One."

The Scripture text from Matthew - one sheep; one little lamb. Ninety-nine were safe and sound, yet the shepherd was not satisfied to let the other one go. He knew the value of one.

As we consider the value of one I want to consider three areas this morning – one God, one community, one mission.

One God

The concept of one God seems very basic to us, but we live in a pluralistic, post-modern society where nothing is as straightforward as it seems it should be.

Recent polls and surveys show how far we have come in North America from the values and beliefs of the Word of God. We don't really need polls and surveys to tell us that things are changing in the areas of religion and spiritual beliefs.

- People are attending church less and less.
- People are choosing to believe in a multiplicity of gods or in no God.
- The view that the Bible is the inspired Word of God is regularly challenged.
- Knowledge of the Scriptures is declining, yet it seems everyone has an opinion about what the Bible says.

- A recent poll in the US showed that less than 1/3 of Americans believe that Jesus is the only way to heaven.

We live in a world where Christianity is viewed as being narrow-minded for even suggesting such a thing. People want freedom to choose their own way. They want to find new ways to satisfaction and self-fulfillment. The old way of repentance and faith is scoffed at.

Yet Jesus made it clear that there is no other way. The old way, the way of Christ is the right way. I'm reminded of a message I heard by Vance Havner – when getting on a plane to fly home, I don't want to hear the pilot say, "Welcome aboard, folks, we are going to try something new this afternoon."

No, there is only one God, and there is only one way to God. Trying something new or different won't get us there.

One Community

All across our land there are communities just like ours, but many of them have no gospel witness—no church or pastor to serve the people or share the good news of Jesus Christ with them.

This week at the VM Board meeting, Bill Powell shared that there are over 400 communities in Saskatchewan—towns, villages and hamlets where there is no gospel witness—no evangelical church or resident pastor to preach the gospel.

The value of one—every one of those communities is populated with people for whom Christ died. Village Missions is seeking to maintain a gospel witness in communities just like ours.

When a community has no church and no pastor or missionary, where do people turn when they are faced with struggles, or hard times? When disaster strikes a community, who do they turn to?

Example – the morning I received a phone call from the school at Crestomere – a boy had been run over and killed while waiting for the bus.... It was a rural community, not even a village, but a community of people who need the Lord.

One community – what can we do to reach that community?

One Mission

In 1948, Rev. Walter Duff, Jr. and his sister, Helen Duff Baugh had a vision to reach out to the rural areas of America by sending missionary pastor families into places where there was no church or the church was dying and had no one to lead them. Their mission was to “Preach the Word and Love the People.”

Twenty years later, a woman by the name of Chris Schuman began to search out communities in western Canada. In 1968 the first Village Missionaries in Canada were sent to Willow River, a little community near Prince George, BC. Their mission was the same – preach the Word and love the people.

Share some thoughts about sitting in on the VM Board Meeting this week. Board members: Lee Gregory, Don Fairholm, Murray Graham, Hal York, Bob Hillhouse, Richard Semenyina.

Our mission continues to be the same. For the past 66 years, Village Missions has been committed to preaching the Word and loving the people in communities across Canada and the United States.

Conclusion

One God and only one way to God through Jesus Christ; one community—communities like ours, filled with people who need Jesus. One mission...

For 66 years, Village Missions has seen the value of one. We have one mission: to keep country churches alive, preaching the Word of our one God, and loving the people, one community at a time. We supply a full-time pastor, often helping with salary, to churches that would otherwise have to close. Our missionary-pastors are there to minister to communities in times of crisis, to rejoice in times of blessing, and to preach the Word. They value each person in their community.

One church can make a big difference in one community. This is our mission. The value of one.