



God's Heart for the World: How Our 10% Can Be a Blessing to the Nations

by Shane Sebastian

I recently heard from one of our students serving on Stint in the 10/40 Window. She regularly meets with the president of the Muslim Student Association. They have become good friends and trust is being built.

This student told our Stinter that she has been having a “dream about the prophet Jesus visiting her.” Our Stinter told her friend it’s very special that Jesus would visit her in a dream. The Muslim girl responded that it actually wasn’t very special at all. It wasn’t special because ten other students in her Muslim club were having the exact same dream.

This is just one of many stories I hear of how God is working through our students around the world. It’s awesome.

I love helping students as they consider going on Stint or on a Summer Mission. Having spent the last few years on Stint with my four children (and even our dog) this is something very near and dear to my wife and me.

I’ve spoken and written much on why going on Stint, or going on a Summer Mission or Vision Trip, is so worth it. I could give you multiple reasons and stories of how God will use you to change lives, how you will point people to an eternal relationship with the loving God that created them, how you will have the adventure of a lifetime working with a team of people, and even how an adventure like this will prepare you for the challenges life will throw at you in the future.

But these pale in comparison to the real reason of why we should consider going overseas; to point people towards Jesus.

I read this in Genesis the other day,

“For Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him.”



The context of this verse is fascinating. God and a few of his angels stopped to have a meal with Abraham and Sarah on their way to Sodom and Gomorrah to pass his judgment. They actually stop to have a bite to eat. I mean do angels even get hungry?

God stops to remind Abraham and Sarah of his promise to not just bless them, but to have them bless the nations. Just a few chapters prior (12:1-3) God had given what is known as the Abrahamic Promise. He tells Abraham that he would bless him to bless others. This blessing is to be one that crosses cultures and reaches out to every nation.



Christopher J.H. Wright writes about the Abrahamic Promise, “God’s promise to Abraham is the key to the rest of Scripture. It is the beginning of mission and at the heart of the gospel. When we forget who we are and why we are here – to participate in the mission of God – then we have lost the plot of scripture.”

Our key to understanding God’s mission and our role in his mission is introduced here in Genesis. At the very beginning of the Bible, and throughout its sixty-six books we read of God’s heart for the world and his plan to share his love with the world. These verses in Psalms are an example of what we see throughout the entire Bible:

May your ways be known throughout the earth,
your saving power among people everywhere.
May the nations praise you, O God.
Yes, may all the nations praise you.

To gain an even better understanding of the theme of the Bible, God’s heart for the world and His plan to use His people to reach the nations, read these passages another time. This makes a great Bible study you can do by yourself or with friends:

Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 18:18, Genesis 22:17-18, Genesis 26:2-4, Genesis 28:13-14, Joshua 4:23-24, 1 Samuel 17:46, Psalm 46:10, Psalm 22:27-28, Psalm 67:1-7, Psalm 86:9-10, Psalm 98:2-3, 7, 9, Psalm 87:4-6, Zephaniah 2:11, Isaiah 12:4-5, Isaiah 56:6-7, Jeremiah 16:19, Ezekiel 36:20-21, Daniel 4:1-3, Malachi 1:11, Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-48, John 20:21, Acts 1:8, Romans 15:20, 1 John 2:2, Jude 23, Revelation 7:9-19.

I could share of how my family and I saw God work when we were overseas. I could tell you how glad I am that I went on Stint (and various Vision Trips and Summer Mission) and why they are so worth it. I could explain how living an adventure like Stint or a summer mission will equip you for the rest of your life. But these fail in comparison to the real reason you should consider going to the nations: To follow God's call to be a blessing to the nations.

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As I recently stepped into a new role with Cru I am struck by how our ministry is all about the world. I mean, of course I knew that before, but now I am even more amazed at how God is working in and through our staff and students as they seek to be a blessing to the nations.

Cru is trusting God to send 10% of our involved students each year to bless the nations. We currently send approximately 3%, and we see God change many lives as a result of your sending. What if we were to more than triple that sending? What if we were to "tithe" 10% each year to be a blessing to the nations?

Tim Casteel leads Cru at the University of Arkansas. I have admired Tim and his staff's commitment to reaching not just the students on his campus and local scope, but students around the world too. Tim and his team (as you all do) model to me what it means to be a blessing to the nations. Read below how they live this out:

As I've researched the largest, healthiest Cru movements, many of them have one thing in common—they build a movement with the world in view. They send. They go after freshmen hard because they want to raise up future missionaries.



I believe a large part of the reason these large movements are so healthy is because they are calling students into something bigger than themselves, something bigger than their campus. They're imploring students- "Come help change the world!".

Our mission is to build movements of spiritual multiplication that will raise up laborers to reach the world.

In the past few years, our movement has made a major shift toward sending. For too long, our vision was limited to reaching our campus. As you know, that's no small task. With tens of thousands of students - our campuses are large. We'll never run out of work in reaching every student on our campuses. But our campuses are too small a thing to give your life to.

Students and staff will only give up so much to reach a campus. Students will give their lives when they see that they are being swept up into God's mission of reaching the world.

Sending to the world helps us reach our campus. Students coming off of international missions are higher quality leaders. They've had to be self-starting leaders who solved complex problems in a cross-cultural context.

Every year Thomas Weakley does a survey with the incoming class of new Cru staff as to what motivated them to join staff. He has found that the top 5 ministry experiences which influenced people to join Cru staff are (in order):

1. STINT
2. Interning
3. International Summer Missions
4. U.S. Summer Missions
5. Leading a small group on campus.

So STINT was more influential than Interning. International Summer Missions were more impactful than U.S. Summer Missions.

If we want to raise up full time laborers, we need to send to the world.

Be generous and see if God doesn't multiply laborers. The needs of the world are greater than on our U.S. campuses. We need to send first and send our best. And trust that God will provide and give back.



This is really hard. But as a movement, we're trying to live this out. We're sending our best staff on STINT next year. And I feel like attitudes on our staff team are changing from "we need more laborers on our campus!" to "let's send as many as possible to the world!"

As the U.S. campus ministry we have, by far, the largest pool of laborers in the world. We have a stewardship to send. May God use the U.S. campus ministry to send generously. To send at least 10% of our movements every year to reach the world for Christ.

My friend John went on an international summer mission his junior year. As a student at UC Santa Barbara John was growing as a leader. After his summer (in Tokyo) he sat down with me and said, "Shane, I'd like to start a ministry here that reaches out to Asian-American



students. Coming from a Japanese family John was excited to start a contextualized ministry that would be a blessing to Asian students on campus.

As an MTL I was beyond stoked. Here was a student coming back from a summer who had caught the vision to reach every student on campus. That year Epic was started at UC Santa Barbara.

As we trust God to send 10% of our students we will hear more and more

stories of how God is helping all cultures and faiths hear and understand who Jesus is. I can't wait.

Discussion Questions:

- Do you think 10% is a good goal and a worthy investment for our movement?
- What gets you excited about sending 10%?
- What are some obstacles to sending 10%?
- What will need to change in order to send 10%? What will you need to do differently?

