

GODD REASONS AGAINST MISSIONS

Lots of sermons on why missions; here's one why we can be excused from interest in foreign missions. Go to account of sending out of 1st foreign miss. Acts 13. Antioch in Syria. Secular history-3rd greatest city of world, tetrapolis of 500000. ~~Strikes~~ Travel agents advertised it as ideal resort. 16 mi from Med beaches, on Orontes river. Foaming frothing beauty in spring. At junction of Taurus and Lebanon ranges so winter resort too. Street thru center 5 mi--2½ paved with marble. Colonnades--only lack in this mall was air cond. ~~Chamber of commerce~~. Chamber of commerce--one of truly cosmopolitan centers of world. Court of Roman gov attracted corps of elite society, literary, art people. Syrians, Greeks and large colony of Jews. Ch hist-2nd capital of Rnty. Started by those who fled over persec of Stephen. 11:19. To Antioch and witnessed to Jews only. Then to Gentiles. Word back to Jerus and sent logical choice Bar. Levite, wealthy, conciliatory, reputation among Xns by large gift. Also discerning. Saw grace of God. Needed help, remembered Saul. Both taught 1 yr. Took famine relief money, then back. Gifted ch, no problems, at least 3 prophets, 2 teachers. Then God interfered with program. Read 13:1-4. Why send missionaries.

I. The Situation in the world is against missions.

No times to send miss. And it wasn't

A. Often hear of good contributions of Rome to spread of Rnty. This is from perspective of looking back on road building, common language, protection of laws. But at time things looked different.

B. Art was result of plunder.

Amphitheaters scenes of bloody cruelty.

Roads, aqueducts built by slave labor.

Slavery itself was cruel.

Empire racked by civil wars, slave wars, wars of conquest.

Government was corrupt from senate in Rome to soldiers who could be bribed and gov who could be persuaded by Jewish elders that disc stole body of X. Send missionaries into this situation.

Suppose a civil war should catch P and B. Suppose they built a church or institution and Rome confiscated it. Suppose law breaks down and they get beaten rather than protected. No time to send miss. Added to this is rel situation.

Rel of Greeks was superstitious worship of every god they could imagine—even unknown one.

Rel of Rome was a pantheon of gods—no god with resultant corruption of morals, Roml. Rel of Jews was as anti-Xn as possible. Sit in world has always been against missions. In 1st c. In Panama, in Honduras during nation-wide evangelistic campaign. In Guat. Will not get better. Evil men worse, 2 Tim 3:13 and yet 4:2 preach. Evangelist, travel. If God didn't call then there is every good reason not to go. The world situation is one—maybe!

II. The Situation in the Home ch is against missions.

1. Ch too young—2-3 years old.
2. Ch needs more stability. All 5 leaders not native to Antioch, unless Manean.
3. Such blessing required they have building plans since houses too small to accommodate.
4. Too many people to reach here, $\frac{1}{2}$ mill.
5. University town. Just reach students and they'll go back and evangelize. But how many do?
6. Too imp't a church and strategic to take 2/5 of staff and send out. God is of order and that would bring disorder to our program.

Never convenient to add to budget to missions, to send people out who could be so much help at home, to seem to spread self thin when so much todo in home town. If looked at situation at home that's good reason ~~for~~ against missions,—maybe.

But the ch didn't suffer. Report of journeys made to Antioch nat Jerus. Later seat of school of lit inter. In 2-3 c 10 councils held there. The world didn't suffer bec they obeyed God and didn't look at world sit. Have you suffered bec P heeded a Macedonian call and gospel went west. Have you suffered bec someone brot Xnty to US. But apart from these pragmatic considerations why these are not good reasons for being against misn.

III. The Situation in Heaven is for missions.

- Why? 1. God loved world. 2. E calls sinners, not rteous to repentance. 3. God does not will any to perish but wishes all saved. 4. Body of E incomplete. 5. God has great blessing in store for ch that hears His voice in calling and responds quickly and wholeheartedly as Antioch. Blessed and prosperous could be the ch of JC if it were sensitive to Lord's voice—Separate those for the work, and they sent them. May there be many churches who like this one lead the way in promoting missions.