

### **Motives; Receiving Side; Covenant Theology**

*We thank You, our Father, for Your good grace and ongoing and deep mercy. Thank You for Your loving commitment to us, Your people. We praise You for how, in the Lord Jesus, You have come close to us. You have bought us back through His life, death, and resurrection. We are glad to be a part of a people that seeks now to walk before You and serve You. Thank You, our Father, for sending us into this world to serve You, to be salt and light, and to be witnesses to the Gospel. Help us to be faithful in that witness and in that life of service. Thank You for your Word, for each other, and for Your presence by Your Holy Spirit. We ask You to guide us in our time together today, in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Let me make some comments about a few more supplemental readings. One book is entitled *The Church* by Edmund Clowney. It is in the *Contours of Christian Theology* series put out by Intervarsity Press. This would not be classified within the missions category per se, but in this book Dr. Clowney exhibits a tremendous awareness of the church of Jesus Christ being in essence multiethnic and multinational. We are sent to serve on a mission as the Lord's people. Throughout the book that notion permeates what he writes. For example, he talks about the church being the Israel of God on page 43, "Then comes total change from the old covenant. Those who were far off are brought near through the blood of Christ. He has made Jews and Gentiles one, reconciling them both in His one body through the cross. Both have the same access in one Spirit to the Father." He is referring there to Ephesians 2. He has some notations to the importance of cultural and linguistic diversity. On page 180 he says, "It enriches our understanding of God's revelation in both nature and Scripture. God's revelation both used and transformed near-Eastern and Hellenistic culture in the inspiration of Scripture. It is not necessary to be a shepherd to appreciate the meaning of pastoral figures in the Bible. God's revelation is not so much super-cultural as it is infra-cultural, the revelation of the divine *logos* from whom culture creators derive their being. The effort to express the revealed truth of the Gospel in other languages and other cultural contexts inevitably opens new perspectives on that revelation itself." This book on the church by Clowney exhibits a wonderful sense of the church being sent on mission and being a multiethnic, multinational people.

Another book is the important work by Harvie Conn, who recently went to be with the Lord. In the most recent generation, he was a leading conservative Reformed missions thinker within wider evangelical circles. The book is entitled *Eternal Word and Changing Worlds: Theology, Anthropology, and Mission in Trialogue*. His premise is that theologians must not perceive themselves as operating within a vacuum and unaffected by cultural realities. Theologians need to realize that they need to listen to what anthropologists and missiologists have to say. Similarly, anthropologists need to get away from operating strictly in a secular social-science manner. Missiologists need to listen to theology. All these sorts of interchange are very important, and he traces the need for that and makes an appeal. For example, he talks about a systematic theological work by Berkoff or Charles Hodge. It is important to realize the particularity of the organization of theological constructs. And it is important to realize that the topics chosen in writing systematic theologies are not unrelated to the particular context in which one finds oneself. The order of the theological topics in a systematic theology relates to the setting. Missions thinking, insofar as there is intercultural interaction going on, will help show that particularity and contextual situation of systematics. It will also show the universal applicability of Christian theological thinking. It gets us out of the thought that there is a systematic theology for all time. Systematic theology might change, be added to, or adjusted in emphasis. As he points out at the end of the book, he does not provide solutions but raises questions.

A concrete example in our setting is that many would say that the *Westminster Confession of Faith*

should have more than we have explicitly about the Holy Spirit or the mission of the church. The historical character of the Westminster Standards can be seen in certain emphases being given where other emphases are not given. Systematic theology might change, but not in that it will prove something wrong or contradict it. It might add to, augment, or change an emphasis.

Harvie Conn remains one of our most important pacesetters in Reformed missiological thinking. He edited a book published in the same year called *Reaching the Unreached: The Old-New Challenge*. Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing put this book out, and it includes authors such as Ralph Winter, Roger Greenway, Paul Long, and others. It is about mobilizing ourselves as the people of God to reach the unreached. Later on in the course we will talk further about the background of the idea of unreached people groups and the importance that that concept has in evangelical missions thinking of our day. This is an important volume that Conn edited as well for us.

Let us move to topic four, which is mission motives and the receiving side. In Verkuyl's writing, he mentions motives for fulfilling the missionary task. It is important to note that among continental Reformed thinkers and Dutch missiological thinkers in particular, Verkuyl has probably been the single leading figure since the late 1960s and 1970s. His book called *Contemporary Missiology* is a very important work for us.

Verkuyl's book was written in a particular context where the motives of the Western missionary movement were being seriously questioned. They had been questioned for a generation but especially after World War II. In the 1950s and 1960s, there were independence movements of countries throughout Africa and Asia. They became independent from colonial rule by Western nations. There was a questioning of what the missionary movement of the previous two centuries was all about. Reactions against it were inevitably intertwined with the Western expansion that had taken place. It is within that sort of defensive posture that this type of explanation of proper and improper missionary motives is given by Verkuyl and others. The context directly relates to the discussion itself. Pure motives do not need a great deal of discussion. We can see the pure motives of obedience, obeying what God has commanded His people to do, and carrying out the assignment He has given us to do in being His witnesses. There are motives of love, mercy, and pity toward those outside of Christ. There is the motive of doxology. John Piper's *Let the Nations Be Glad* has brought the motive of bringing praise to God and seeing peoples come to praise the God of the Bible as a paramount motive for this cross-cultural missionary task. There is also the eschatological motive based on Matthew 24:14, which says that the Gospel will be preached to all nations, and then the end will come. Some want to say that the Gospel needs to be heard by all sorts of peoples, and then Jesus will return. Related to that is the notion of hastening Jesus' return or hurrying before people die. People die into a crisis eternity, so we must hurry with the Gospel. There is the healthy personal motive, just as Paul wrote of how he too wanted to partake of the Gospel and see more of its glory and goodness. That helped to drive him to serve Christ and be a church planter. All those are good and proper motives for being about the cross-cultural missionary task.

Similarly, there are impure motives that Verkuyl lists. These do not need a great deal of comment, either. The imperialist motive is one that is not pure. It is to go and help pave the way for your particular nation to rule. The perception was that the missionaries come first, and then come the soldiers. The cultural motive is to impose aspects of culture. This can include customs, language, or legal structure. "These poor, unenlightened, culturally backward people need what we have to offer them. We will make them into the same kinds of people we are, down to the way we dress, eat, and speak." The commercial motive is another impure one. It gets tricky, because money gets wrapped up in missions because of how to support missionaries and ministries. You have seen missionaries down through the years get tied up

with moneymaking enterprises, not for impure motives but to support what is going on. Often times it turns into something that becomes primarily a moneymaking enterprise. Certainly to go for the sake of sending gold back to the home country or personally profiting would be an impure motive. Another impure motive is what Verkuyl calls ecclesiastical colonialism. In this your main goal is to set up your church system and government alone and not allow the host setting to have input into what their church will look like. Again, this gets tricky. I am convinced from the Scriptures and from my own experience that Presbyterianism is the biblical form and manner of church government. One way I personally live with that is to note that just because you set up a Presbyterian structure does not mean that you have Presbyterianism active. Often times you will have Presbyterianism active when you do not have a Presbyterian structure. It makes you ask what Presbyterianism is all about. Simply to go and set up the church the way you want it set up is an impure motive.

The question of missionary motives gets deflected a bit and put in a more peripheral place when you consider what Lamin Sanneh and others have pointed out. Basically they say that there is a fundamental importance of the receiving side in mission. Lamin Sanneh currently is a professor of world Christianity at Yale Divinity School. He grew up as a Muslim in Gambia, West Africa. He became a Christian while studying in Britain, and he has spent the last several years in the United States. His book, *Translating the Message*, focuses on the importance of the translation of the Scriptures, especially in Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the modern missionary movement. Much of what Dr. Sanneh argues throughout this book is that you can throw stones at the modern missionary movement in all sorts of ways. You can also find all sorts of impure and unhealthy motives. The missionaries were people of their day, and they had feet of clay. But he also says that that is not the primary point. The primary point is that the Bible has come to us in our languages. God speaks to us, and the Lord Jesus Christ has come to us. That is what is centrally important here. It is a theological historical matter about God coming to us in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not as though the missionaries brought God; God was already here. But through the missionaries' work, particularly the Protestant missionaries, the Bible was translated into various mother tongues. This is a Protestant impulse, to translate the Bible into other languages as opposed to a pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic impulse to hang on to the centrality of Latin. It means that God speaks directly to us, and this is our God coming to us in Jesus Christ. Sanneh says that is what is important.

Let me give a few quotations from Dr. Sanneh's book that are particularly important and telling points of what he argues. One says, "The adoption of local idiom suggests a radical shift from the literalness of the text to a fresh discourse." At the beginning of this section, Dr. Sanneh cites all sorts of examples of different translations of passages that will have different meanings. In different languages, what certain texts mean will be heard differently in the target language. Therefore how the Scriptures should be translated and what is heard opens up a whole new, fresh discourse. It is not as though you take one translation and plunk it into another place, and it is all fixed. The translation needs to take place from the original into the local idiom. That is a whole, fresh dynamic that goes on, whether deciding on a word for "deity" or any other word.

Some have asked how to maintain the important place of the preacher and translator in translating the Bible into the local idiom. I do not think Dr. Sanneh wants to minimize the necessary place of the preacher/translator exegete in presenting the Scriptures any less than he would want to minimize the importance of a preacher in a chapel service at Covenant Seminary. Essentially you see the same dynamic happening to where a preacher going from the original languages speaks in the English language in contemporary terms that people here can understand. You have to have someone who is familiar with the original settings in order to bring the meaning of the original languages to the front. When you are in a setting where you do not have the Scriptures translated into a particular language yet,

that person's role takes on all the more importance. Sanneh points out the necessary place of the expatriate exegete translator/preacher, but he also notes that the native speakers have to be there to enable the expatriate to communicate in that language. And what is really important is what the native people understand. They need to understand and hear through a translation, so you have to have the translation. He does not try to minimize the necessity of the preacher/translator, but he wants to move it out of a place of such central importance that it has been given in some of our minds.

It has also been asked how not to be condescending in coming to the level of the people, assuming that they cannot understand what was written earlier. God has condescended to speak to our particular hearts in our mother tongue. The person who already has the Scriptures in his or her language may help people learn for the first time what the Scriptures say in their mother tongue. This person needs to counteract a condescending attitude that he or she might have by having the proper understanding that we too did not have the Scriptures in our tongue at one point. We need to continually hear afresh what the Scriptures say in our language. I am not on the inside of what is happening in this dynamic, as these native speakers are, and therefore I am always in a posture of learning what the Scriptures actually say to these people. Having that attitude would help counteract that posture of condescension.

Dr. Sanneh on page 198 says, "No one linguistic maneuver is inherently superior to another, and all language use is conditioned by its special context." That was particularly important in Africa, where everything had been degraded to the point of almost being nonhuman. The sheer reality and fact that the Bible could be translated into our mother tongue shows that our mother tongue is just as worthy as any other language to convey God's revelatory truth. There are obvious historical differences where God's Word has come into some languages prior to others. Therefore the Word of God affected certain languages more than it affected others because of entering earlier, historically, into that language. For example, you can see biblical imagery and language used in ways that would not be the case in languages that did not have the Bible translated into their tongues earlier. In terms of language as language being able to convey the Word of God, there is not one that is set up over another. I heard, for example, one pastor in Japan report that others had told him that Dutch was the superior theological language. Dutch was the language for best conveying theological truth. To a Dutch speaker, while recognizing the historical place of Christian thought and the Word of God in forming concepts expressed in Dutch, that is fair to a point. But Dr. Sanneh asserts that to say that Dutch as Dutch is more superior than Spanish, Hungarian, or any other language is nonsense.

Sanneh goes on to say, "A necessary precondition for effective translation is the surrender to the terms of the receptor culture." He does not say that it is total cultural relativity. He argues against that. He does say that with the translation of the Bible into new languages, it is the new language and the new setting that dictates the terms more than an exterior language. In interaction with the biblical languages, there is a translation that takes place from Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek into the new language. It is not like this language dictates to the originals what the originals say. That is not what Dr. Sanneh says. He says that when you have an expatriate coming in who speaks English or French, it is not as though what this person thinks in his or her terms is more important than what these people think in their terms. It is the receptor culture that will set the pace. You see this in the history of revivals, especially in the twentieth century. In the east African and Korean revivals, the Christian faith really took off. Worship, teaching, and evangelism took place in the indigenous languages, and it got out of the expatriate's control. That is okay, because God has taken the risk to do that. Therefore there will be a built-in diversity within the Christian faith as it is expressed, understood, and practiced within different cultural and linguistic settings.

Let me say it differently. The receptor culture is not going to be obliterated in terms of the constructs

and categories that are used for expressing the Word of God. Insofar as the Word of God is translated into a particular language, necessarily there will be some continuity with what was already there in the Word of God now set forth in this language. Someone coming in from the outside has to recognize that and operate on these terms. It is not solely done this way; there is change that is brought. The Word of God does bring change, and Sanneh does not deny that. I do not want to continue to pick on the Dutch. If you go to Alaska and see what has happened in terms of the evangelization of Native Americans in Alaska, contrary to what the orthodox did who preserved indigenous languages, the Presbyterians insisted that they learn English. I am told that many of the Presbyterian Native Americans in Alaska are English-speaking and Presbyterian but not very Native American. This is an argument that pushes us toward dynamic translation as opposed to literal wooden translation. Again, as an expatriate coming in as a translator and facilitator, you will necessarily need to operate within that target language.

Let me give an example of dynamic translation as opposed to wooden translation. The best example for an English translation of the Bible can be seen if you look at the New International Version (NIV) as opposed to the New American Standard Bible (NASB). The NASB is more of a "literal" translation, where you can look at the order of the words and the types of words and go almost directly to see what the originals say. It is almost a word-for-word, in-the-same-order-translation. The NIV, however, takes a little more liberty, if you will, in expressing in more contemporary and fluid language what the original says. Which is more literal depends on how you define that word. That is why I call it a wooden translation. The dynamic one takes a little more liberty in seeing that the meaning is equivalent to what the original meaning was. It is not so much word for word.

Dr. Sanneh points out on page 203 that "the sort of radical pluralism represented by translatability promotes cultural particularity while affirming in God its relativizing universal..." There is always going to be a universal/particular tension dynamic within the Christian faith. You have an affirmation of cultural reality in the receiving setting. "Making the Bible in its translated form the chief object of missionary endeavor [had] two important consequences...: first, the vernacular acquired the significance of a revelatory medium, becoming more than an autonomous linguistic device (though that was important), but also carrying the implication that God was at work in that medium."

Yes, there is change, but because God speaks His Word in a language that is already there, to some degree or another, there is an affirmation of that language. It is not right, as some people have wanted to do, to bring in a whole new language, wipe the slate clean, and plunk it down. That is not what the Christian faith involved. That is closer to what Islam is about. Islam brings in the Arabic Koran anywhere in the world, and it will be Arabic. If it is not Arabic, it is not the Koran. The Bible, however, is translated into the indigenous language, and that carries with it a measure of affirmation to the receiving context. It also brings judgment and change. But it emphasizes the significance of that medium. It also carries the implication that God was at work in that medium in doing so. It implies some measure of continuity with what is already there, including notions of God. If there is no continuity, then there would be no continuity with the terms for deity that are used. There is difference and change but some continuity as well. Continuity includes what the local people practice and understand religiously. Translation plugs into those resident and existing ideas and terms. There will be some measure of continuity in that way. That implies that God was already there somehow at work.

These seem to be underlying epistemological questions that occur among missiologists. Sanneh discusses some of these matters, and those discussions necessarily come to the fore. We will not get into them a great deal here, but epistemology enters into the picture. It shows how complex and subversive these questions become, because they leave no area untouched. For example, there is discussion of Western theological notions that you have certain propositions that are objective, understood in a certain

way, supra-cultural, and can be plunked into any setting in exactly the same way. Some say these are the defined truth and the same way for everyone. That sort of notion is seriously questioned. The kinds of notions it brought into the discussion epistemologically include knowing collectively intuitive knowledge and both/and versus either/or thinking.

Some have asked if God is present, at work, and understood rightly within situations like with witchdoctors and in demon possession. Somehow the image of God, as the Creator Lord, is there, and true knowledge is somehow there—to a point. It is repressed, distorted, not full, and not salvific knowledge apart from Jesus Christ. Even witchdoctors show a general longing for God. We know from the Scripture, for example Psalm 19, Romans 1, and theologically from God being the Creator Lord, that He is always involved with all sorts of people. Dr. Sanneh wants us to realize that insofar as language is a vehicle for God's revelation to us, those languages, as representative expressions of religious understandings and practice in various places, have some sort of connection to the Creator of those people.

Sometimes there seems to be such a wide gap between the original and the target language that it can create confusion. For example, the Japanese words for God and sin can be so vastly different. When you go back to when Christianity first came to Japan, you see Francis Xavier, a Jesuit who came in 1549. One of his first tasks as he used his not very good translator was to come up with what the Japanese term for God was. The term for God that his translator gave him was *dainichi*, or big sun. So Xavier started to preach about *dainichi*, but then he found out that that is a Buddhist term for God. He knew he could not use that name, so he decided to use the real name for God, which is Elohim. The problem with using the real name for God is that it is not Japanese. It is Latin informed by Greek, and it has become defined by the Scriptures. The Protestant term that it turned out to be in Japanese is one that is very much a pantheistic notion of God with hardly any connection to the biblical God. Some discussion today within evangelical Protestant circles is that we need to come up with another term for God. That is part of the problem that you encounter and part of the discussion. You can have imports to illustrate, but generally speaking, God has taken the risk to see the Scriptures translated into target languages.

Dr. Sanneh goes on to note that “Second, the sola-scriptura principle resulted in uncoupling the Bible from the tradition of Western commentaries, and thus from an important source of Western cultural and intellectual values.” He notes the modern missionary movement. Insofar as the Scriptures are translated, for example the Bible into African languages, it is legitimate to express the Bible and comments about the Bible in these languages. There are strong movements today about having commentaries written in particular languages. The nuances, emphases, and insights will not line up exactly with what is seen in Western commentaries. Those automatically are connected to their particular settings. It is not to say that there is a total disconnect, because there is the universal aspect, but there is a particular aspect as well.

Let us go on to think about contextualization and what is happening. There is a course offered here on contextualization, and we are not going to solve the whole thing right here in 10 minutes. There is an often used and good model of contextualization taken from Eugene Nida that speaks evangelically. You have the translator coming into a new and different cultural setting where the source, message, and receptor of the message in the translator's setting are different from the new setting. Then there is a third cultural reality of the biblical cultures that is translated into the new setting. The discussion from Sanneh points out that while what happens in the translator's setting in translation and contextualization is necessary, what is really important is what happens in the new setting. God speaks to the new setting, and those people react to God. The people in the new setting interact with the Scriptures, not adding to them and changing them but wrestling with them. Similarly, the new setting affects the translator. Those

of you who have been in cross-cultural work and have lived cross-culturally know full well that when someone moves into a new environment, the culture of that person changes primarily. That does not mean that there is no change wrought in the receiving environment, but the change is wrought primarily in the person's original culture. The change that the person's culture undergoes is terribly significant. You cannot really help facilitate this contextualizing process in a new environment if you do not partially become like that new environment.

The importance of the receiving side is what Dr. Sanneh points us to. When you look at the whole modern missionary movement of the past 200 years, there is criticism of what happened. But praise the Lord that the Scriptures have come into our languages here. That is what is really important. That is where the grace of God is manifest. That overshadows the ineptness and imperfections of these folks here. We can thank God for these people who facilitated the translation of the Word of God into our languages and mother tongue. That strikes me as an extremely healthy and constructive posture for people to take instead of just simply throwing rocks. You can throw rocks all day and pick up some more and keep throwing them. That is not to say that motives of the translators are unimportant, because they are. But they are not centrally important and certainly not the only factor involved.

Dr. Sanneh asserts that "the history of missions, therefore, is more than the account of organizing the missionary effort in Europe and North America, important as that may be. It is also about the actual reception and operation in the field where the richness of detail makes the question of the missionaries' alleged cultural motives somewhat peripheral." Think about the book of Jonah and how we relate to that as a missionary book in this regard. The book of Jonah is quite rightly used as a motivator for us to take the Gospel to all sorts of people—even though we might be reluctant we have to realize that God's love should compel us just like God's love should have compelled Jonah to go to the Ninevites. But when you take a focus on the receiving side, and we put ourselves in that scenario, we should also be able to connect with the Ninevites. God did not just send Jonah to the Ninevites. You could say that God brought Jonah to the Ninevites. God is disappointed with, bringing judgment on, and wants to redeem the Ninevites. Therefore He goes to Jonah and tells him to go. It is not as though God hides behind Jonah and tells him to go. He brings Jonah to Ninevah because He has something He wants to say to them through Jonah. In the same sort of way, all of us belong to peoples that at one point did not have the Gospel. God brought the Gospel to us, and that reception among our sort of people in our language is very critical. We need to be able to connect with that aspect of the Gospel transmission prospect as well. We must not simply put ourselves in the transmitter's side of it, which is what we can tend to do and forget that our sort of people were also a recipient of the Gospel. That is so helpful in my estimation for cultivating humility and a learning posture and seeing the importance of the receiving side of mission.

In a similar way, Paul argues for giving toward the relief of the famine-stricken Christians in Judea in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, and he points toward our belonging together. Where there is plenty, it should shore up where there is a lack. When we think about how the Gospel is translated, sent, and brought, it is from where there is plenty to where there is a lack. It is not from a situation of superiority to one of inferiority. In Romans 15 there is a similar notion with Paul when he points out the material gift that the Gentiles offer to the famine-stricken Christians. They are spiritually connected and indebted. There is an interconnection across cultures that is so very important. The importance of the receiving side in mission is the single main point to be taken.

The European culture today is closer to biblical standards than pre-Christian pagan European cultures, and it has been informed and changed by biblical truth. To say otherwise would deny the power of the Gospel in transforming culture. There will be change, judgment, and growth in receiving cultures of the Gospel. Part of what is counteracted has been the posture that in pre-Christian cultures there is no value.

Dr. Sanneh would say that when you go as a translator, you can go with the assumption that God has already prepared a measure of understanding to receive the message. I think he would say that the message that you take will be one that God gives to them further through you. But do not take that and run with it. It is necessarily risky to take this sort of posture. I have heard, and you likely have heard, Christian preachers blast the non-Christian liberal notion that God is in pagan cultures. That is true if you want to say that all cultures have an equally legitimate understanding of a relationship with God. But to bring down any sense of non-Christian and pre-Christian peoples having any relationship with the God of the Bible does not allow God to be God. Sanneh's stance is true to the Scriptures, and it wrestles with the questions that come up with this notion of the translation of the Christian faith in the Scriptures. I do not think it squares with covenant theology either.

Our fifth and next topic is covenant theology. One of the objectives of this course is to integrate mission thinking with a Reformed, covenantal worldview. When we think of Reformed theology, we commonly think of TULIP, predestination, and God's sovereignty. Those are distinctives of Reformed thinking, but they are not the total picture of what Reformed and covenant theology is. We see covenant and Reformed theology as the same, but at Covenant Seminary, we stress the exegetical basis of covenant theology. We are committed to the Scriptures and see covenant theology emerging from the Scriptures. It is biblical, and we go that direction as opposed to having a primary philosophical commitment to what Reformed theology is and making sure that the Scriptures square with it. The result may be the same, but the direction, commitment, and biblical basis is different. Covenant theology and Reformed understandings of the Scriptures come from the Scriptures.

When you think about missions, the Great Commission is a great place to start, and that is where a lot of people start. Jesus said go, so we need to go. I have heard that sermon too many times to count. But that is not where God's world mission begins in the Bible. So people go back to Abraham in Genesis 12 where God says, "I will bless all the nations through you." But that is not the beginning of the Scriptures either. It is an improvement over starting in the New Testament, but if you simply go back to Genesis 12, you tend to neglect the ongoing from the beginning dealings of God with all sorts of people. God has always been concerned about the ancient Chinese. They have never been in a situation where they did not have to deal with God. You can run that risk of neglecting that and seeing God only at work in Palestine and where the children of Israel go. You can forget that He has always been the God of all the world. We need to go back to creation to see God as the creator Lord. He gives His covenant with His creation, but the representatives of that creation rebel. God's response is not to give up and send judgment. Instead He gives promise immediately of restoration and recreation of everything, focused on what He does in the seed of the woman, Jesus the Christ. That is covenant theology, and throughout the Scriptures you can see God's work to redeem His world. That redemptive movement of Scripture culminates in Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. God is the God of all the world, but He works in a particular and unique way in old covenant Israel to prepare the way for the Savior of the world. That does not mean that that is all He does throughout the centuries leading up to Jesus. He deals with the Ninevites, the Amorites, the Philistines, and the Egyptians. He also committed Himself to work in a particular way through the children of Israel. That is covenant theology.

We need to think about God's world mission in covenant theological terms. Go to the books of Romans and Ephesians. The recent sermon in chapel out of Ephesians 1 preached by Dr. Chapell was a great missions sermon. God has His great plan to redeem all peoples, and He has gathered us up into His plan. That is God's world mission. In Romans, Paul does not simply write a detailed theological treatise. He wants to get those Jews and Gentiles to be able to live together within the church there. He says God has called them from among the nations. Those who thought that because they were Jews they had a market

on knowing who God was, He is the God of Jews and Gentiles alike. It is not just the ones who have been given the Law; it is the ones who do the Law who are saved. But no one obeys the Law perfectly. It is by faith alone that Jew and Gentile alike are saved. Paul says this very explicitly in Romans 3. God is the God of all peoples, and there is only one God. Therefore all are saved by faith alone. Paul talks about all sorts of people in Romans. We have been justified, both Jew and Gentile alike. This was a remarkable revolutionary statement that the Judaizers hated. We are justified and saved together by faith alone. All of creation longs to see this full redemption of the people of God, Paul says in Romans 8. Historically this is what we have seen happen with the children of Israel, but God has not left the others alone. I am an example of someone who has come into the faith. Those of you who are Gentiles have been grafted in, and together we are the Israel of God. That is the way Israel is saved, as it says in Romans 9 through 11. How we live together is from Romans 12 on. When you get to Romans 15, Paul talks about how God has been at work in this way as we see and the prophet Isaiah foretold. One voice, Jew and Gentile together, can worship God. To me that is what the book of Romans is all about. Justification by faith highlights the fact that all of us together receive the good news of Jesus Christ. There is no advantage that anyone has ethnically, and there is no disadvantage either. It is all by faith alone. It seems to be very clear in Romans, Ephesians, and throughout the Scriptures that God's world mission bursts forth.

It is not as though you have to create a biblical theology of mission, as important as that is. The Bible itself is part and parcel connected with what God's mission is about. That is who God is as a covenant God. He is out to redeem His world, and that is what His mission is about. As Paul argues in Romans, Galatians, and throughout his letters, it is the triune God's redemption of the cosmos wherein He grants by His grace among all the world's peoples. He fought against those Judaizers, who wanted to restrict God to their sort of people. That is why He got so angry at Peter. He told Peter he was violating the Gospel. Redemption was for all sorts of people, wherein He brings faith and matures the church. God is out to bring foretaste now and finally full realization of the new heavens and the new earth. I cannot help but see a coming together in a marriage and full overlap of covenant theology and Reformed thinking in what God's world mission is all about. To say therefore that God is a missionary God seems obvious. To say that the Bible is a missionary book is a given. Covenant theology is mission theology, though there are caricatures that because God has predestined the elect then we do not need to do anything. You ought to know that it is because of God's grace, mercy, and goodness to use His people within that mission that we have full hope and confidence. It is not as though we can sit back and not do anything.

So that we do not get any further behind, let me make a few comments. Verkuyl, in his book *Contemporary Missiology*, lays out a biblical foundation of world mission. He too sees the Old Testament and New Testament together pointing toward the reign of God as being that end toward which God moves throughout history. Similarly, in Shenk, pages 7 through 19, there are rubrics of what he calls the mission dynamic. This includes God's reign, a focus on Jesus the Messiah, by the Holy Spirit, through the church, in the world, and pointing toward the eschaton. He makes an important comment on page 16 where he says that the legacy of Christendom and the way it developed in Europe is that the church becomes home base and headquarters. Instead the church should realize itself to be a mission-sent people in the world. That is one legacy, outcome, and residue of European Christendom that we need to fight against. We need to recover the fact that we are a mission-sent people to the world, not just simply home headquarters, sending out others into the world. That is a new thing that those of us in that type of setting need to recover.

Let me give you a question to think through for next time: what have been the relationships between views of culture that people have had over the last few centuries during the modern mission movement and conceptions of Christian mission? People within the modern missionary movement have had certain

understandings and views of culture. Similarly, people have had certain views of what Christian mission involves and how it goes about. What has been the relationship between those views of culture and conceptions of Christian mission?