

Father from man's perspective the world appears to be coming apart without a plan. But we know from your infallible Word that You are building your Church and focusing your power in the Gospel every day. For the greatest miracle since the resurrection of our Lord is happening every day in the regeneration of your elect ones. Thank you for pouring out your love on so many countless souls on the great continent of Africa.

This land especially has our attention this evening. We think of how many 1000's each day are coming to faith in Christ in Africa and we are struck with the thought: *who will feed these sheep; who will tend these newborn lambs?* But it takes courage, dedication, and sacrifice to get the job done, for the forces of darkness oppose our efforts. Just as Joshua commanded four times in chapter one (prior to taking Canaan: "Be strong and courageous."

So also, our efforts to build up and guard the flock are opposed by the evil—the usurper blinds hearts and minds. So we give thanks to Thee that the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but powerful for the destruction of strongholds/fortresses. . . Father, by your plan, our Savior has won the victory in order to give it to His Church—it is our blessed task to appropriate what Christ has won.

Lord you have told us that your Church is built up and enlarged in the world by means of discipleship. Oh to have enough disciple-makers—enough shepherds. For, you have said in your great compassion that the multitudes are distressed and dispirited like sheep without a shepherd. You said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. "Therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Mt 9:36-38).

Now who are these laborers that You are sending if not disciple-makers sent to fulfill the Great Commission? There is not a great number willing to go—but there are faithful ones who have been going and will keep going. And it is our responsibility to keep extending to them a life line of prayer support and resources as they minister in many distant places. In the final analysis, every true Christ-follower is a disciple-maker—and in terms of missions is either a goer or a sender.

Just at the Apostle Paul majored in making the needs of the saints known to all of the churches, so tonight we setting forth the needs of God's faithful ministers that we might see a generous match made between vision and resources. Father, we ask you to bless the speakers tonight in an unusual way. Churn our hearts—prevail there so that your cause becomes our cause. And may those here who cannot go to this massive continent to train shepherds, may they be equally invested in missions by committing to hold up your servants in prayer and provide them with needed resources to continue as laborers in your harvest.