

May Mission Month

From Taroona to Townsville, from Byron to Bussleton, from Port Lincoln to Palmerston... Christians around the country focus on global mission in May. While mission features in services and small groups throughout the year, May is a significant time to unite with thousands of others for a special focus.

Following the launch of the *Moved* DVD and study series in 2012, many people will make 2013 the year to be *Moved*. For others, the following May Mission Month pages provide thoughts, ideas, Bible studies and stories for individuals, small groups and whole congregations to refer to during the month.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

- **Use as a small group study.** Read the passage, discuss the questions together and commit to doing one of the Explore activities over the course of the week or longer term. As a group, choose to support one of the projects as part of your giving to mission.
- **If you are not part of a small group, use the passages, questions and stories to guide your daily time with God.** Meditate on the bible verses, journal your responses to the discussion questions, challenge yourself to learn more about cross-cultural mission and support a project or cross-cultural worker.
- **For pastors or small group leaders** visit the May Mission Month page www.globalinteraction.org.au. Here you will find Sermon and Passage Notes plus extra resources that will help you involve your congregation and small group in May Mission Month.

Time to be MOVED?

In 2012 Global Interaction launched *MOVED*, a resource to help churches enthuse, educate and equip people to partner with God and serve His purposes in local and global mission.

Almost 4000 individuals have used the small group guides and 400 groups have used the DVD. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

One pastor commented, "the short video clips gave insights into what God is doing around the world and also sharpened our missiology. (It is a bonus too that it is a truly Baptist and 'Aussie' product)."

Another said, "*MOVED* has made a real 'buzz' in the church community. It has stirred many people personally about how God wants to send them into our neighbourhood, our city and around the globe."

Many congregations benefit from a whole church focus for a few weeks in their calendar. There is great potential for transformation in the life of individuals and the church as a whole.

Pastors and leaders can use the DVD, Resource Guide and Small Group Guide to follow a three week program, or pick and choose elements to suit your needs.

This May Mission Month we encourage you to be *MOVED* by the thought-provoking, engaging and powerful resource.



ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.GLOBALINTERACTION.ORG.AU

WEEK 1 GO

When it comes to the "Go" aspect of cross-cultural mission, we can all too easily look to the person beside us and wonder if God is calling them. We can assume that to go and make disciples in the back blocks of Planet Earth is reserved for the super spiritual or the intellectual theologian. Yet all across the world, average Aussies are doing the extraordinary, as they join a Global Interaction team in partnership with God, to share their lives and faith with people in other cultures. This week, we encourage you to humbly, bravely and seriously consider whether God is asking you to join them.

ASK YOURSELF

What images or stereotypes exist about people who serve overseas?

What are some characteristics of people I know who have served overseas?

What might a 'call' to mission involve for me?

What is stopping me from going? Are they insurmountable barriers?

YOUR STORY

"It was during my early 20s, when I was involved in Essendon Baptist (VIC), that I began to pay attention during the May Mission Month focus. Bit by bit, I made contact with Global Interaction and attended young adult events. This led to me going on two Global Xposure trips and building friendships with some of the team. They encouraged me to consider going for a longer time. One thing led to another and in 2012 I joined the team in Malawi, working with the Yawo people group. Now, the May Mission Month focus at Essendon focuses on my ministry!" *Elizabeth Dymock*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LUKE 10:1-3, MATTHEW 28:18-20 AND EPHESIANS 3:7-13

- 1 Why do you think the New Testament doesn't tell us anything about who the "seventy-two" were?
- 2 What are the potential costs of obeying Jesus' call to go? How does being a "lamb among wolves" make you feel?
- 3 Read Matt 28:19-20. What steps does Jesus tell us are key for making disciples?
- 4 Why do you think more people don't respond to Jesus' command to 'Go'? Are these excuses or valid reasons?

PASSAGE KEY POINTS

LUKE 10:1, 3

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place where He was about to go... Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves

- Jesus calls people to go - He appoints and sends them
- Jesus' disciples go 'ahead' of Him to announce and herald His coming; their job is to point towards Him
- Jesus gives a very simple and direct command, "Go!"
- Jesus knows it would be 'safer' to stay, but His disciples must be willing to suffer as He did for the sake of others (lambs among wolves)

"Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God"

William Carey

EXPLORE

- 1 **Contact a cross-cultural worker** and find out about the journey that led them to go. Use the Contact section of the Global Interaction Guide. Email an overseas worker or have a coffee with one who's preparing to go.
- 2 **Get involved in a cultural group** in your city. Teach English, play soccer, make lanterns, cook naan, learn to weave and attend cultural festivals.
- 3 Forget New Zealand! **Take a family holiday in Asia.** Share a meal with some cross-cultural workers and get a taste for what it's like to live there.
- 4 **Contact a mosque or temple** in your city and arrange a visit. Talk with the leaders about what their faith means to them.
- 5 **Talk to your pastor about planning a Global Xposure trip.** These three-week trips are a great way to experience the life and work of cross-cultural workers.

WEEK

2

PRAY

In the amazing conversation called prayer, we communicate with the creator of the universe. Like all ministries, prayer is a critical part of involvement in cross-cultural mission. Prayers from the pews in Australia, prayers from the plane seats of cross-cultural workers, prayers from the paddy field farmers of Asia... our God loves communicating with us! This week, we encourage you to fervently, persistently and passionately pray for cross-cultural workers and the people they live among.

ASK YOURSELF

- What needs of the world move me the most?
- What inspires me to pray for cross-cultural mission?
- What value have I seen prayer add to my life?
- What impact might prayer have for the millions who haven't heard the message of Jesus?

YOUR STORY

"A group of people from Clarence Baptist (TAS) met together for a special time of prayer for mission. We began with Bible readings, a poem, and shared the Global Interaction prayer needs for least-reached people groups. We took communion with large pieces of bread and large glasses of juice, depicting God's provision of enough to go around. We used symbols as we prayed, one being a ring of nine beads, representing the nine people groups where Global Interaction works. We wrote prayers on the back of small cards, prayed them out loud and tied them to a leafless branch in a pot, along with photos and printed prayers. We each held bags of seeds and stalks of wheat as we prayed together that the seed of our prayers would reap a harvest of eternal food."
Brian Loys

PASSAGE KEY POINTS

LUKE 10:2

The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

- There are many people around the world waiting to hear and respond to the Good News!
- There are not many Christians who are willing to go
- God sees the need, cares about the need, and wants to act through His people to see the need met
- We can make a difference with our prayers: we are called to ask God to move His people to go and provide for the needs of those who have not heard

"Prayer is the way to both the heart of God and the heart of the world... Praying is letting one's own heart become the place where the tears of God's children merge and become tears of hope"

Henri Nouwen

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LUKE 10:2, MATTHEW 7:7-11 AND 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

- 1 Do you believe it is true today that the "harvest is plentiful"? Why or why not?
- 2 What does it mean to you that God is the "Lord of the harvest"?
- 3 How has God answered your prayers in the past? What impact has this had on your life and others?
- 4 How could we play a part in being the answer to our own prayers?

EXPLORE

- 1 **Subscribe** to Global Interaction's prayer resources available online or in print.
- 2 **Set a daily reminder** on your phone to pray for people who have not yet heard the message of Jesus.
- 3 In your small group, **commit to learning more** about a least-reached people group and pray for them each time you meet. Contact a Global Interaction worker to access regular prayer information and stories.
- 4 **Unleash some creativity** as you pray - write, draw, sculpt, dance, play an instrument. For ideas go to the Just Prayer page on the Global Interaction website.

WEEK

3

GIVE

Giving to mission is not just about handing over money and hoping for the best. When we give, we are making a statement; we are saying that all I have has come from God and I will give back to Him. We are saying I have enough (and sometimes only just enough), therefore let me give to those who don't. May my gift help a cross-cultural worker share the love and grace of Jesus with someone who desperately needs to hear it.

ASK YOURSELF

- What has been my motivation for giving to mission in the past?
- How do I decide what to give to?
- How does the Bible speak about giving? What stories or verses come to mind?
- Can I say that I have 'enough'? What does 'enough' look like for me?

YOUR STORY

"At Bankstown Baptist (NSW) we believe everyone has something to contribute. Over recent years, we've tried to find creative ways to raise funds for Global Interaction projects including a high tea and three course meal, a Mother's day handmade gift stall, an auction where members 'sell' their skills like cleaning, gardening and baby-sitting and a Party with a Purpose where people learn a craft or skill. What fun we've had, while learning about mission and raising much-needed funds." *Cheryl Wagner*

PASSAGE KEY POINTS

LUKE 10:4, 7

Do not take a purse or bag or sandals, and do not greet anyone on the road... Stay in that house, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

- The disciples who go out to preach the Good News are asked to go, free from distraction of material possessions. They are to be disencumbered, not distracted by what they do or don't have
- Those who go are to be provided for and have their own needs met
- Others of us are given the privilege of blessing those who go, as they are working on our behalf. We are called to partner with them and pay them as they "deserve"

"Not, how much money will I give to God, but, how much of God's money will I keep for myself?" John Wesley

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LUKE 10:4, 7, 1 TIMOTHY 6:17-19 AND DEUTERONOMY 15:7-8

- 1 Why is it important for cross-cultural workers to be "disencumbered"?
- 2 In the past, missionaries received gifts from home like second-hand teabags and worn-out clothes. While the intentions may have been good, what message does this send to them? What would it look like to bless cross-cultural workers as those who "deserve their wages"?
- 3 Statistics tend to show that Christians are more willing to give directly to the poor, rather than to other Christians who serve the poor. Why do you think this is?
- 4 As well as financial giving, what are other ways we can bless and provide for our cross-cultural workers?
- 5 What are the attitudes God wants His people to have towards giving? (Deut 15)

EXPLORE

- 1 **Choose an hour** of your working week as a reminder to pray for cross-cultural mission. Give your wage for that hour to support the work.
- 2 **Support a family** who is on home assignment or preparing to go: take their kids to the zoo, ask your youth group to clean their car and mow their lawn, shout them a massage or a meal out.
- 3 **Swap your coffee for ministry** in Cambodia, your magazine money for Malawi, your tea money for Thailand and your massage money for Mozambique.
- 4 **Teach your kids to save and give**, save and give, save and give some more.
- 5 **Search the Projects section** of the Global Interaction website and find a project that resonates with you. Pray about how you can save, or fundraise money to support it.

WEEK

4

UNDERSTAND

The Bible is the story of God’s unending love of His people and His mission in the world. He calls each of us to join Him in this mission and play a part in bringing about the Kingdom of Heaven. To go, to pray and to give, we need to understand some of the vast needs of least-reached people groups. Many of these people groups not only have limited or no access to the message of Jesus, but are also some of the poorest people groups on the planet.

ASK YOURSELF

What are some moments or stories from the Bible that highlight God’s mission in the world?

What do I know about least-reached people groups? Who might be people who have never heard of Jesus – why, and where are they?

Who are the cross-cultural workers that my church supports?

What people groups are they living and working among?

YOUR STORY

“I know that God has called me to serve the IB people in South East Asia but I am not sure of the timing. As I prepare I have moved from Bundoora, where I’ve been for all of my youth, to Broadmeadows. This will obviously be a big shift but one that I look forward to. But as many mates have well quipped, “Why would you want to move to ‘Broady’?”

Well for me there are several reasons. For a while I’ve wanted to live in a more multicultural suburb in Melbourne (check!). I’d like to build friendships with the locals (many of other faiths) and share meals and the Gospel with them (check). I’d like to live with & serve alongside other Christian guys with a similar interest (check). And I want to branch out & experience being in a new neighbourhood & context (check). In essence it will be a microcosm of my future overseas experience, only on home turf.” *Mark*

PASSAGE KEY POINTS

LUKE 10:8-11

When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is set before you. Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’ But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into the streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your town that sticks to our feet we wipe off against you. Yet be sure of this: The kingdom of God is near.’

- The disciples were to meet in people’s homes and eat their food – this is a picture of meeting people on their own terms, which requires being prepared, knowing how they live.
- Those who go are called to meet both the physical and spiritual needs they encounter. It is helpful for those going and those praying to know what these needs are and what resources might be required to meet them.
- Different people respond differently to Jesus. Understanding the barriers to the Gospel, praying for them to be removed, and sharing the Gospel in relevant ways can all help prepare the ground for more people to accept Jesus and by faith enter His Kingdom.

“To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and an open map” William Carey

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

LUKE 10:8-11, 1 CORINTHIANS 9:19-23 AND PROVERBS 18:2, 19:8

- 1 Why do you think it is important in life to try to understand other people?
- 2 What kinds of things would be important to know about someone before sharing the Good News with them?
- 3 Understanding happens in our minds. What does it look like to apply this understanding to the way we live? How does Paul do this?
- 4 How do we apply this concept of “understanding others” to those people our cross-cultural workers have been sent to, and those people groups we are giving to and praying for?

EXPLORE

- 1 Take the time to get to know people of different cultures and faiths living in your neighbourhood. Talk with your local council, volunteer, join in and learn.
- 2 Go deeper in your understanding of God’s mission for the world. Read an article about mission, immerse yourself in the Bible and have a coffee with a missiologist or cross-cultural worker.
- 3 Meet with mission enthusiasts or the mission team at your church and discuss the core values and focus of your church’s mission policy or strategy. If you don’t have one, contact Global Interaction for help on how to write one!
- 4 Buy an atlas or make ‘The Joshua Project’ your home page and learn about the least-reached people groups of the world.
- 5 Watch *Samsara* and *Baraka* movies on DVD and pray for the people you see.