

Why Missions Education in the Bible Class?

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To ask the question of why missions education should be a vital part of the Bible class curriculum is actually to ask the more basic question as to why the church itself should be concerned with missions. To answer the second question is also to answer the first. Very simply, if the church does not see its mission as that of seeking and saving the lost, it is not the church that Jesus established. And, therefore, without missions in the Bible school, the curriculum fails to perpetuate the primary reason for the church's existence.

Children of today are the church of tomorrow. What they are experiencing in the Bible school today will shape the decisions that they will make in the future. If that experience is narrow and focused only on those around them, then missions will be defined as taking care of one's own. If they can be taught a love for lost souls that transcends language, political borders, and race, not only will they become the missionaries of tomorrow but they will also have a Christian worldview.

Adult attitudes and values have their formation in childhood. It is in childhood that one learns to love or to hate; to be self-centered or to be other-centered; to be accepting or to be exclusive; to be faith-directed or world-driven. Positive attitudes and values do not just "happen" but they are cultivated and developed through experiences, by direct teaching, and by coming in contact with role models. Because children are so teachable, missions **must** be at the center of the Bible school. This means that the curriculum should provide teaching that emphasizes the role Christians must play in evangelizing the world. It must also provide opportunities for hands-on activities that teach missions through practice as well as theory. Finally, it must give young people role models by putting them in contact with real life ambassadors for Christ.

The question is not why missions in the Bible school or why the church should be involved with missions. The real question is whether or not the church will accept its ministry of reconciliation and, therefore, truly become the church of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:18).