

WHOSE MISSIONARY ARE YOU?

The "Flip Side" of the Great Commission

by Paul Carden

Centers For Apologetics Research
P.O. Box 1196
San Juan Capistrano
CA 92693 USA
TheCenters@aol.com
www.TheCenters.org

Tel: 949.496.2000
Fax: 949.496.2244

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves."

Matthew 23:15

As I turned the page, the smiling faces of a clean-cut family of four beamed up at me. Above them appear the inviting words, "Can You Serve in a FOREIGN FIELD?" On the next page, Tom, a pioneer missionary to tribes in the Amazon jungle, explains: "After preaching full-time for 13 years in the United States, my wife and I felt that we needed a new challenge. We're happier than we've ever been before; it's truly a wonderful way of life." After several more pages of enthusiastic reports from other happy missionaries about their converts and the satisfying success of their work, the article concludes that "perhaps you too can experience the joy of serving on a foreign field."

If you're a Jehovah's Witness, that is.

The article described above appears in the October 15, 1999 edition of *The Watchtower* magazine, and the cult's call for each of its millions of members to serve ever more sacrificially is virtually ceaseless. Though the movement doesn't release statistics on its foreign missionaries, last year nearly 700,000 JW's around the world (some as young as nine years old!) committed enough extra hours of proselytizing each month to be rated as "pioneers."

"Nineteen new missions opened around the world — in just six weeks!" Is this a praise report from World Vision, Campus Crusade, or the Southern Baptist convention? No. This headline leaps from the pages of *The Auditor*, "The Monthly Journal of Scientology," which celebrates the sect's burst of expansion in Nigeria, Finland, Russia, Hungary, Fiji, and Italy. And the story doesn't end there: the next edition of *The Auditor* describes an emotional moment at a May 9th rally of Scientologists "from all over the Americas":

When the President of the Church of Scientology, Mr. Heber Jentzsch, announced the massive project which had just completed the translations and printing of Dianetics in 52 languages, he told the audience:

"And with those 6.3 million words, we have just increased the planetary coverage of Book One to over 80% of the world's population. Which is to say, nearly 5 billion people now have Book One available in their native language."

And the audience jumped to its feet cheering as huge displays of the new books Mr. Jentzsch had just announced filled the stage.

The latest issue of *International Scientology News* features articles and photos of L. Ron Hubbard's disciples eagerly sharing their faith in Rwanda, Albania, Bosnia, Croatia, Slovenia, Kosovo, the Philippines, Turkey, and India. Why are they so driven?

In the words of the editors: "It doesn't have to take a long time to achieve the Aims of Scientology on this planet. And factually, we don't have a long time. Only Scientology can salvage mankind. And we are the ones who can provide it."

But the call to missionary service is being heard — and heeded — by the Mormons as well. The August 28 issue of the ***LDS Church News*** boasts that "One word describes the Church's missionary work during the past century — success." The cult takes particular pride in the fact that in just two decades their full-time missionary force has virtually doubled, from some 30,000 to 60,000. And they know just who to target: As Thomas S. Monson of the cult's First Presidency reminded a gathering of 131 new Mormon mission presidents in June, missionaries are to seek out vulnerable people in transition — "people who have recently moved or who have lost a loved one or had a birth in the family."

Not to be outdone, the cultic "Boston Movement" of Kip McKean (also known as the International Churches of Christ or ICC) now claims 358 churches in 155 countries, with a combined Sunday attendance of nearly 200,000. McKean's followers consider him a man comparable to Moses or Martin Luther, raised up to launch "God's modern-day movement" (i.e., one true church), which is "defining Christianity for the nations." Reflecting on their 20 years of aggressive missionary work, the ICC editors write in *LA Story*:

The USSR has fragmented into 15 nations, and strong churches of [ICC] disciples led by nationals exist in all of those nations and Mongolia. Incredibly, the Moscow Church has an attendance of 3,635 and its daughter church in Kiev, Ukraine has an attendance of 4,085. Seven churches meet in China. Eastern Europe is being evangelized. Churches meet in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Apartheid is dead, and a strong multiracial church with an attendance of nearly 4,000 meets in Johannesburg. One year from now there will be [ICC] disciples in every nation of the Middle East.

This, then, is "the flip side" of the Great Commission — the worldwide missionary thrust of the cults and heretical movements — and most Christians are barely aware of it. By God's grace and your prayers, the Centers have begun to make an impact in some of the least-served countries and cultures where cults are attacking the Body of Christ and making merchandise of the lost. One of our fundamental purposes is to alert God's people to the growing danger this threat presents.

And you can make a difference in this battle — right where you live. 🌐



Paul Carden is the executive director of the Centers for Apologetics Research (CFAR), an international network of cult research and education agencies serving eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Latin America, and Africa. To contact him, write to TheCenters@aol.com.

CFAR equips God's people across borders and cultures for discernment, the defense of the faith, and cult evangelism. To learn how you can help, call CFAR at (949) 496-2000 or visit our web site at www.TheCenters.org.