

## **Missio Ecclesia Readings. February, 2016. Bishop Ken Carter**

“Mission is not just something that the church does; it is something done by the Spirit, who is himself the witness, who changes both the world and the church.”

Lesslie Newbigin, The Open Secret, 56

“Do not try to call them back to where they were, and do not try to call them to where you are, beautiful as that place may seem to you. You must have the courage to go to a place that neither you nor they have been before.”

Vincent Donovan, Christianity Rediscovered, preface.

“The crisis confronting denominations is one of imagination. What is required is a revolution in imagination that enables us to move away from established cultural metaphors (such as hub-spoke). We are no longer in a period of management and predictability that allowed us to create centralized operations run by experts (where programs were dreamed up by teams of professionals and then marketed down the chain). We live in what is being called a “distributive age”. It is a time that calls for cooperation in which ideas generated at the local level and experimentation cultivates an alternative future. This distributive age does not call for the dismantling of existing structures but the investment of trust in very different places.”

Alan Roxburgh, Structured For Mission, 126.

“Early Methodism was a holiness movement that evangelized people both inside and outside the church. To frame it with my definition of evangelism, Methodism was a holiness movement that initiated people into a holy life, revealed in Jesus Christ, anchored in the church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, surrendered to the reign of God, for the transformation of the world.”

Elaine Heath, Longing For Spring, 41

“Methodist life was marked by a deep and authentic personal piety that led to a broad and uncompromising social involvement. Methodists were known for their prayers and for their commitment to the poor and disenfranchised. This commitment resulted in persistent efforts to build houses of prayer and worship as well as consistent efforts to visit the prisons, build schools and hospitals, and work for laws which moved toward a just and peaceful social order. Not everyone agreed with or applauded the way early Methodists lived, but it did not require many at any one place to make a difference. Because they took their relationship to Jesus Christ with utmost seriousness, their life of prayer and witness was readily identified and often contagious as many wanted what Methodists appeared to have.

“Among these Methodist gifts were a certain knowledge of their own salvation, and at-homeness in this world and confidence in the next, a living companionship with a living Christ, and access to the power of God that could and did transform the most broken and hopeless persons into productive, joyful and faithful disciples. Such was the power of God at work in the way Methodists lived. Methodists believed that they were to be the leaven that God could use to transform the church and the world.”

Rueben Job, A Wesleyan Spiritual Reader, 193-194

“As bad as the current practice may be, it will not be put right by attending simply to conversion, baptism, and the commitment to love God and neighbor. It also requires handing over the substance of the Christian creed, introducing the initiate to the gifts of the Spirit, and providing him or her with the rudiments of the classical spiritual disciplines. In other words, we not only need to attend to the experiential, communal, and moral dimensions of initiation; we also need to deal with its intellectual, operational, and disciplinary aspects.”

William Abraham, The Logic of Evangelism, 142

“If you make disciples, you always get the church. But if you make a church, you rarely get disciples. If you set out to build the church, there is no guarantee you will make disciples. It is far more likely that you will create consumers who depend on the spiritual services that religious professionals provide. If you disciple people well, you will always get mission.”

Mike Breen, Building a Discipling Culture, Chapter One.

A fresh expression is a form of church for our changing culture, established primarily for the benefit of people who are not yet members of any church. It will come into being through principles of listening, service, incarnational mission and making disciples. It will have the potential to become a mature expression of church shaped by the Gospel and the enduring marks of the church and for its cultural context.

Mission-Shaped Church: Church Planting and Fresh Expressions in a Changing Context

“The dark malaise of the Christian church in our time is that so many congregations have developed a preoccupation with their weaknesses, their problems and their concerns. It is as if there were no open tomb or risen Lord. It is as if these congregations preferred to live locked in a closed tomb, focusing on their past and refusing to recognize the strengths God has shared with them that they might be in mission in this world.”

Ken Callahan, Twelve Keys to An Effective Church, xxi.

“Our main doctrines, which include all the rest, are three—that of repentance, of faith, and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door; the third, religion itself.”

John Wesley, “Principles of a Methodist Farther Explained”

“Christian leaders cannot simply be persons who have well-informed opinions about the burning issues of our time. Their leadership must be rooted in the permanent, intimate relationship with the incarnate Word, Jesus., and they need to find there the source for their words, advice and guidance...Dealing with burning issues without being rooted in a deep personal relationship with God easily leads to divisiveness because, before we know it our sense of self is caught up in our opinion on a given subject. But when we are securely rooted in personal intimacy with the source of life, it will be possible to remain flexible without being relativistic, convinced without being rigid, willing to confront without being offensive, gentle and forgiving without being soft, and true witnesses without being manipulative. For Christian leadership to be fruitful in the future, a movement from the moral to the mystical is required.

Henri Nouwen, In The Name of Jesus, 31-32