



LIFE GROUP CURRICULUM

WHATEVER IT TAKES
for the gospel

COTTONWOOD CREEK CHURCH

Lesson 1: Whatever It Takes To Work Together – Missionary Story

C. T. Studd (December 2, 1860 – July 16, 1931)

Charles Thomas (C.T.) Studd was born on December 2, 1860, in the United Kingdom. He was the son of a very wealthy family and grew up with great privilege. An outstanding athlete, C.T. excelled in the game of Cricket. He was known throughout the United Kingdom as one of the best Cricketer's to ever play the sport.

The Gospel was introduced to C.T. and he accepted Christ as his personal Savior early in his college years. Before he graduated college, he had fully committed his life to serving Christ and made the decision to go to China as a missionary. He, along with six other young men from Cambridge University, became part of the China Inland Mission and began their preparations to go to China. This small group of committed young men began to be referred to as the Cambridge Seven and captured the imagination of the public throughout the United Kingdom. Perhaps it was because C.T. and three of the others were all well-known athletes and one was an officer of the Royal Artillery. Each of the Cambridge Seven had turned their back on promising careers to follow God's leading to take the Gospel to a foreign land. C.T., accustomed to being a part of a winning team, now demonstrated that same drive and determination with this team so that he and his teammates could take the Gospel to China.

His purpose shifted from being a successful athlete with a promising future to being a submitted and committed servant of Christ trusting fully in God to direct his steps. C.T. wrote that he went down on his knees and gave himself up to God, praying *Take my life and let it be, consecrated, Lord, to thee*. The same words as the words of Frances Ridley Havergal's consecration hymn.

C.T. believed that he was to trust only in Christ; and Christ would work in C.T.'s life to do His good pleasure.

A significant amount of money was left to C.T. from his father's estate. However, he believed that to fully trust God and not be diverted from his new purpose he must divest himself of his fortune. So, he sent large checks to several different ministry groups leaving himself only a small amount of money which he planned to give to his wife when they married. He was engaged to Priscilla Stewart, a single missionary from Ireland, who was serving in China. C.T. told her that he had given away all his fortune except for this small amount that he was giving to her. Priscilla also believed that they should trust God for all their needs. She sent the money that C.T. had given to her to another missionary whom she knew had a significant need due to an illness. Together C.T. and Priscilla shared the purpose of being fully consecrated to Christ and depending on and trusting only Him with their every need.

During his years as a famous Cricket player, C.T.'s mission had been to win the game. However, after his conversion to Christ, his mission changed. Now his mission was to take the Gospel to as many people as he could. This mission to preach the Gospel took him not only to China but also to India and finally to Africa where he preached the Gospel until his death.

After serving almost 10 years in China, the Studds returned home to England in 1894 for a time of rest and to recover from ill health. C.T. and Priscilla each served as single missionaries, then married and four daughters were born to them during the 10 years that they were in China. (Two children did not survive infancy.)

C.T. was not to be deterred from his mission of preaching the Gospel even by his own ill health or that of Priscilla's. As soon as his health improved, he began to travel throughout the United Kingdom speaking

at colleges, universities and churches sharing the Gospel, and when he wasn't speaking to groups, he was visiting his own family members that were not saved, in order to share the Gospel with them.

In 1900 C.T. and his family had the opportunity to go to India for him to preach the Gospel in the same area where his father had made much of his fortune. C.T. had long felt a responsibility to take the Gospel to this part of India. This initial preaching trip ended with he and his family staying there and ministering for six years before returning to England to rest. Another reason that they returned to England was for the girls to have an opportunity to attend school. Their intention was to someday return to India to continue his mission of preaching the Gospel in India.

However, God has a way of expanding "our" mission to accomplish "His" mission. This was true for C.T. In 1908 after returning from India and while in Liverpool, C.T. saw a sign that captured his attention, "Cannibals want missionaries." His reaction was that of being a little amused and somewhat curious. He went into the building where he saw the sign to learn more. It was there that he met a man named, Dr. Karl Kumm who had walked across Africa and was telling his story to a group a people gathered in the building. He related that there were numbers of tribes in Africa who had never heard the story of Jesus Christ. Dr. Kumm related that many explorers, big-game hunters, traders, etc. had gone to the African continent but no Christian had gone there to tell the people of Jesus. C.T.'s heart was pricked with compassion for these lost tribes; however, his heart was also conflicted by his desire to return to India. He didn't believe that his health would allow him to be approved by physicians to go to Africa. He also knew that Priscilla's health was too fragile to embark on such an undertaking. However, the burden on his heart did not subside and he began to pray for God's clear direction as he also began to explore the possibility of taking the Gospel to Africa.

Once again C.T. Studd witnessed God's miraculous power on his mission as one by one the obstacles were overcome, and he succeeded in taking the Gospel to Africa. On December 15, 1910, C.T. Studd set sail for Africa. The team looked a little different on this trip. This time C.T. was alone on the voyage while Priscilla and the girls remained in England due to Priscilla's fragile health. Through the 20 plus years that C.T. Studd served the Lord in Africa, his team was comprised primarily of Africans who heard the Gospel message through his preaching. From time to time someone from England would join him for a short time to help with the preaching. During those same years, Priscilla served the Lord and served the mission of taking the Gospel to Africa by speaking to groups in England to encourage prayer and financial support, writing letters of encouragement and keeping the home fires burning. The Heart of Africa Missions founded by C.T. Studd ultimately became the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade with each separate field having its own title, i.e., Heart of Africa, Heart of Amazonia, etc. as the organization grew and more areas were reached with the Gospel.

Studd's work in Africa saw thousands accept Christ, churches established, and scores of African workers become a part of His team to reach Africa with the Gospel.

C. T. Studd's life was marked by his courage for Christ and his willingness to sacrifice for Him – doing whatever it takes to spread the Gospel. He once said: "I have searched into my life and do not know of anything else that I can sacrifice to the Lord Jesus." Alfred Buxton, his son-in-law, and fellow pioneer in Africa, stated "C. T.'s life stands as a sign to all succeeding generations that it is worthwhile to lose all this world can offer and stake everything on the world to come. His life will be an eternal rebuke to easy-going Christianity. He demonstrated what it means to follow Christ without counting the cost and without looking back."

C.T. Studd was a whatever it takes Christian.

Lesson 2 – Whatever It Takes To Grow – Missionary Story

Hudson Taylor (May 21, 1832 – June 3, 1905)

Hudson Taylor, an early missionary to China, shows us by his life and by his work that he indeed was a whatever it takes Christian so that the Chinese people could hear the Gospel. His story is a story of spiritual growth.

Hudson was born to parents who had a deep interest in China and who had prayed that their newborn son would “work for You in China.” On a quiet afternoon when he was 17, he was reading one of his father’s books and was confronted with the message of salvation. Reading that Christ died for our sins and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the world, he was struck by the thought that the whole work of salvation was finished, the debt paid and the only thing that he could do was to accept God’s gift of salvation and then thank Him for it. That is exactly what he did. This began a lifetime of serving God to reach others, in particular the Chinese people with the Gospel.

The next several years Hudson dedicated himself to preparing to go to China. Not only did he immerse himself in the study of God’s Word, but he also learned the elementary rudiments of medicine, became a licensed midwife, and began to learn Mandarin.

September 19, 1853, found Hudson Taylor leaving behind his love of England and family for his love for Christ and for the Chinese people. On that day, as an agent of the Chinese Evangelization Society, he boarded the *Dumfries*, a small clipper ship headed for China. He knew no one on board and he knew no one in China. He did have in his pocket three letters of introduction to people that could help him once he arrived. He had received two of these letters from casual acquaintances, and the third letter came from a virtual stranger.

When he arrived in China, he learned that one of the persons for whom he had a letter of introduction had died two months previously, and the second person had sailed to America a few weeks prior. His hope was diminishing. His last potential contact was the one he knew the least about and the one he had not expected to be of much help. To his surprise this gentleman, Rev. Dr. Medhurst, who was in China with the London Mission, welcomed him into his home where Hudson lived for the first six months after arriving in China. Dr. Medhurst also helped to secure Hudson’s first Chinese language teacher. The letter of introduction that Hudson thought would be of no help was the instrument that God used to get Hudson Taylor started on his work to bring the Gospel to China.

Hudson was not in China very long when he decided that his appearance was a distraction to reaching the Chinese people with the Gospel. He believed that if he looked more like the Chinese people that they would be more willing to talk with him. He began to dress in Chinese clothing, he grew his hair long enough to have a pigtail (like the Chinese men) and he colored his hair black with shoe polish. While his fellow Protestants in China were either incredulous or critical of his decision, God blessed his commitment. He began to have successful conversations with the Chinese people and shared the Gospel with them.

It was not long before Hudson came to believe that many of the missionaries he met and observed were “worldly” and spent too much time with English businessmen and diplomats who desired and needed their services as translators. Their “talk” was that of the world concerning worldly activities. He committed that his talk was to be the talk of God’s Word.

Hudson Taylor's heart yearned to take the Gospel to the interior of China. So, only a few months after arriving in China and with a very limited ability to speak Chinese, he and a fellow missionary, Joseph Edkins, set sail down the Huangpu River handing out Chinese Bibles and salvation tracts. Before many months passed, he had established a church in the interior and the work began to grow.

Before six years passed, Hudson Taylor resigned from the Chinese Evangelization Society (because they had proved incapable of paying their missionaries) and became an independent missionary trusting God to meet his needs. He married Maria Dyer, who was in China with her missionary parents, all the while pouring himself into his missionary work. By the summer of 1860, he was exhausted and very ill. He and Maria were forced to return to England to recover.

This time spent in England proved to be a turning point both in Hudson's health and his life and ministry. Once he was somewhat recovered, he began the work of revising the Chinese translation of the New Testament. The vision for the China Inland Mission began to develop in his mind and heart. He could not escape the truth that a million souls a month were dying without God. He began to pray for workers to go with him to China. As he prayed for workers, God spoke to his heart about the need for leadership for these workers. In time Hudson surrendered his heart to God to be the leadership of that endeavor, if indeed that was God's will for him. He began to pray specifically for 24 missionaries for China. The 24 workers included 2 for each of the eleven provinces of China and 2 for Mongolia.

Hudson Taylor began to make the vision a reality when he took his last \$50 and opened a bank account in the name of "China Inland Mission." He then wrote a pamphlet entitled *China's Spiritual Need and Claims* to inform the Christians in England about the great need in China. As this pamphlet circulated across England, hearts were moved for the spiritual needs of China. People were moved to pray, to give and to go!

On May 26, 1866, Hudson Taylor with his wife and children sailed with 14 other missionaries back to China as the first group of missionaries for the China Inland Mission. Only eternity will reveal the numbers of people that came to Christ because Hudson Taylor surrendered his life to God's plan to do whatever it takes to grow in Christ and to reach people with the Gospel.

Hudson Taylor continued his work in China until his death on June 3, 1905. He had sacrificed much personally. Maria died after only 12 years of marriage, his second wife also died, and four of his eight children died when they were very young. By the time Hudson died in 1905, there were 825 missionaries serving in every province of China, 300 mission stations, 500 local Chinese helpers, and over 25,000 new Chinese Christians. The China Inland Mission remained active in spreading the Gospel in China until 1950 when its main operation was moved to Singapore to protect the Chinese churches. In 1964, the name of the agency was changed to Overseas Missionary Fellowship and this agency continues to send the Gospel around the world and particularly to Asian countries.

The heartbeat of Hudson Taylor's vision and work is best described by his own words . . .

China is not to be won for Christ by quiet, ease-loving men and women. . . The stamp of men and women we need is such as will put Jesus, China and souls first and foremost in everything and at every time – even life itself must be secondary.

Hudson Taylor was a whatever it takes Christian to reach the Chinese people with the Gospel.

Lesson 3 – Whatever It Takes To Join God’s Plan – Missionary Story

William Carey
(August 17, 1761 – June 9, 1834)

William Carey, who is often credited as being the Father of modern Protestant missions, was born in a small, obscure village in middle England. His father was a school master and instilled in William the practice of diligent study and hard work. However, it was his Uncle Peter who told him stories of ships and the sea, of people in other countries, of wildlife, and of trees and flowers which created in William a great fascination of the New World.

In spite of the daily ritual of Bible reading by his parents and their insistence on strict church attendance, William had little interest in religious books or things of a spiritual nature. He later acknowledged it was this early training that remained in his heart and mind and were of great influence in his adult life. His real interest was to be a gardener like his favorite uncle. However, William suffered with an illness that caused a severe skin irritation to get much worse when he was in the sun; and after two years he had to abandon his plan to be a gardener. It is interesting to note that he was able to later spend more than 40 years in the heat and sun of Bengal when he had been unable to withstand the sun of England. This is perhaps an illustration of what can happen when one follows God’s plan for their life rather than one’s own plan or the world’s plan.

When his work as a gardener ended, his father arranged for him to be an apprentice to a cobbler. Another apprentice in this shop was a young man named John Warr. Though not a believer in Christ when he and William initially met, John Warr soon after accepted Christ and in William’s words, “he became importunate with me, lending me books which gradually wrought a change in my thinking, and my inward uneasiness increased.”

Warr’s changed life along with his persuasive witness to William soon had Carey attending prayer meetings and church services with John. Within a few months, William Carey accepted Christ and there found peace and joy, and an unsatiable thirst for the Word of God. The more he learned of God’s truth, the more he wanted to know. This combined with his interest in the world beyond England, led him to think of those in the regions beyond who did not know God.

This compelling thirst for knowledge and his growing questions about taking the Gospel beyond England was proving to be a terrible distraction for his work as a cobbler. He had begun an evening school to supplement his income and he had also started to do some preaching. One of the most interesting things to note about William Carey’s life is that while he was diligent and described himself as a “plodder and one who could persevere,” he did not experience “success”. He was not successful at being a cobbler; in fact, his shoemaker employer agreed to continue to pay him his part-time salary if he would stop making shoes and just focus on his studies -- Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. He was not popular as a preacher either. His sister said to someone after he had preached in his hometown, that his family preferred for him to go away home than come home to preach.

However, it was William’s desire to see the Gospel taken to the ends of the earth that gave him the courage to speak up at a local minister’s association meeting and propose that they discuss the topic “Whether the command given to the apostles to teach all nations was not binding on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world.” An older pastor in the meeting strongly rebuked Carey publicly. He shouted at him, “Young man, sit down, sit down! You are an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the heathen, he’ll do it without consulting you or me.” Carey sat down, but the fire in his heart to reach the lost with the Gospel was not quenched. Rather, he went home and wrote the pamphlet, “An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens” which called upon the

churches to engage in taking the Gospel to foreign lands. At a later association meeting that year, he was asked to preach and again in his sermon he pressed them to heed Scripture (Isaiah 54:2-3 KJV) to “enlarge the place of thy tent . . . lengthen thy cords.” It was in this sermon that he declared that they should “Expect great things!” And that they should “Attempt great things!” From this, the Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel amongst the Heathen was formed. The name was later changed to the Baptist Missionary Society.

William Carey believed that God would use anyone and anything to accomplish His Plan and he knew that it was God’s plan for the Gospel to go to the ends of the earth. Carey told his pastor friends in England that he was willing to go if they would hold the ropes. With the assurance that he had the support of the Society, he began to make plans to leave for India. To the human mind it was a daunting venture -- just the cost of passage seemed insurmountable, his father said he was “mad” for even considering it, and his wife, Dorothy, was vehemently opposed and refused to go with him. Though she relented and finally agreed to go if her sister could go with them. None of this discouraged Carey – he pressed forward and on June 13, 1793, Carey and his family boarded a boat and sailed for five months before reaching India. It was a difficult and perilous journey. However, William Carey knew that he was following God’s plan and with that assurance he never looked back.

Life was not easy for the Carey family. Yet, William Carey the plodder pressed on, studying Bengali and in a few weeks began to preach to small gatherings through a translator. He also began a rudimentary Bible translation. The work continued and so did the hardships with the family suffering severe illness. Their 5-year-old son Peter died, and his wife Dorothy suffered from debilitating depression and delusions. In it all, Carey clung to his faith, finding joy in knowing that this was God’s plan, and he wrote, “But I rejoice that I am here, notwithstanding; and God is here, Who not only can have compassion, but is able to save to the uttermost.”

In 1799 a group of eight adults and five children arrived from England to help him. Included in this group was a printer who would set up a printing press for the mission; and a teacher who would start a school. Since this mission group was no longer just Carey and his family, he made the decision to move the base of the work to Serampore, a city near Calcutta. In December 1800 after seven years of labor, Carey baptized his first Indian convert. In February 1801, the first Bengali New Testament was printed. Carey was appointed as a teacher of Bengali and Sanskrit at Fort Williams College in April of 1801. (Fort Williams College was a school for British civil servants in Calcutta.) The mission also gained prestige in the country as well as government printing contracts which provided much needed funds for the mission.

Carey’s work in India had a slow start yet he left a huge legacy all owing to the truth that God can use anything or anyone to accomplish His plans. Carey’s accomplishments for God included more than 1,407 converts baptized by him or his associates; the Bible translated into Bengali, Sanskrit and several other dialects. He and his team promoted education, founding the Serampore College which educated both believers and unbelievers, with its primary goal to train indigenous ministers.

William Carey was a missionary who did whatever it took to become a part of God’s Plan.

Lesson 4 -Whatever It Takes To Be Faithful – Missionary Story

John and Betty Stam

(John: January 18, 1907 – December 8, 1934)

(Betty: February 22, 1906 – December 8, 1934)

When you look at the lives of John and Betty Stam one cannot help but believe that they were born to a life of faithful service to the Lord. John was the seventh child of a Christian couple in Paterson, New Jersey, who had a heart for missions. They founded the Star of Hope Mission where large evangelistic meetings were held and the Gospel faithfully proclaimed to all who came to listen. Many young people including John Stam who served in ministry at the mission went on to serve God both in the United States as well as in countries around the globe.

Betty was born in Albion, Michigan, to a couple preparing to go to China as missionaries. When she was six months old, she and her parents sailed to China for her parents to begin their work of evangelism and Bible Teaching. Betty grew up in China and returned to the U.S. to attend college.

Both young people were from similar yet different backgrounds and grew to become committed Christians, seeking God's will for their lives no matter the cost. Each of them committed their lives to serving God in China independent of the other. They met at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago when they attended prayer meetings on campus specifically to pray for the work of the China Inland Mission (CIM). This was the beginning of a lengthy friendship that ultimately blossomed into a deep love for one another.

Betty was approved as a missionary by the China Inland Mission and departed for China in the fall of 1931. John was not approved by the CIM until July 1, 1932 and sailed for China September 24, 1932. He arrived in Shanghai, China on October 12 ready to begin his ministry. Little did he know that Betty was also in Shanghai and soon they would be reunited. John and Betty were married on October 25, 1933, at the mission compound in Tsinan where Betty's parents served. After a two-week honeymoon in Tsingtao, Betty's childhood home, they traveled up the Yangtze river to Wuhu and then to Suancheng where they would base their missionary work.

The great opposition they knew they would face in China as Gospel missionaries was an accepted fact for each of them; yet they also believed that God was greater than any opposition they might face. During the years prior to their arrival in the country, there was great political unrest as the Chinese Civil War was moving across the country. The Chinese Communist movement was known to kill Christians and especially foreign Christian missionaries. As single missionaries they had both faced great danger from bandits, rebel soldiers, and Communist soldiers. John wrote to his parents, "And so we can praise God that for us everything is well. If we should go on before, it is only the quicker to enjoy the bliss of the Savior's presence, then soon to be released from the fight against sin and Satan. Meanwhile, we can continue to praise Him from whom all blessings flow."

They eagerly settled into their home in Suancheng, and were quickly immersed in the ministry, holding Bible studies, leading children's meetings and doing one-on-one evangelism and discipleship training. In addition, they each continued their language studies to be more proficient in the language. By January of 1934, they were traveling into the countryside to do evangelism and meet with faithful bands of believers while maintaining the work at Suancheng.

In July of 1934, they were asked to return to Wuhu to look over the duties of the CIM's local secretary at the CIM office so that the secretary and his wife could take a much needed two-month rest. While the office duties were not what John enjoyed doing, he was glad to be in Wuhu because Betty was pregnant and there was a good hospital to care for her when she delivered their child. Helen Priscilla Stam was

born on September 11, 1934. John and Betty were ecstatic to have this little one join their family and to be returning to their work of evangelism and church building.

They were planning to go to an area in southern Anhwei, instead of returning to Suancheng. Even though rumors continued of increasing unrest and trouble in this area, the district magistrate of that area assured John and a fellow missionary that there was no danger of Communists in the area. He went on to tell them that they could move to the area immediately and that he would guarantee their safety. It was with that assurance from the district magistrate that the CIM officials gave permission for the Stams and the other missionary family to move to southern Anhwei.

The Stam family set out for their new home in Southern Anhwei on November 22, 1934, and held their first Church service on Sunday, November 25th. On that Sunday, the service was attended by the missionaries, their household servants, a carrier they hired, two unbelievers from the community and one young girl from the immediate neighborhood. The next Sunday it was only the missionaries and their household servants who attended the service. Things were changing quickly in the area and not for good.

On December 6, 1934, 2,000 Communist soldiers (known as Red soldiers) attacked and quickly overpowered the city. Within hours there were 6,000 Red soldiers in their area. The city was overtaken, three city officials were killed, the town was ransacked with the soldiers looting and taking food, money and anything of value. The soldiers went on to kill 14 of the city's leaders, and captured John, Betty and little Helen. The soldiers talked openly in front of John and Betty of killing the baby. However, an anonymous onlooker objected to them killing the baby. Instead, the soldiers killed the onlooker.

The Stams and other captives were forced to march 12 miles over mountain roads by their captors to the city of Miaosheo with John carrying the baby on his back. Part of the way, Betty was allowed to ride a horse that the soldiers confiscated. Once they reached Miaosheo, the Stams were left in the oversight of the local postmaster who turned out to be sympathetic to them. John was able to write a quick note to the CIM officials in Shanghai informing them that he and his family had been taken captive by the Communist soldiers. He asked the postmaster to make sure his letter was delivered. That evening, the Stams were taken to a deserted home for the night where John was tied to a pole standing up. Betty was left without restraints so that she could care for the baby. The soldiers guarded the house to ensure that the Stams did not escape.

Early the next morning, the soldiers seized John and Betty leaving baby Helen behind. Just before the soldiers came into the house early in the morning, Betty had wrapped the sleeping baby tightly in a blanket, hiding two \$5.00 bills in the baby's clothing and prayed that Helen would be protected. Within hours, first John and then Betty met the enemy's sword and found themselves immediately in God's presence.

Chinese believers who fled to the mountains to hide from the soldiers slowly returned to the town of Miaosheo, which by now was deserted by the Communist soldiers who had moved on to other towns. A Chinese evangelist named Lo learned of the death of the Stams and together with a handful of believers rescued the bodies. An elderly woman told Evangelist Lo that there had also been a foreign baby with them and led him to the house where the Stams had spent the night. Evangelist Lo entered the home and heard baby Helen crying. He rescued her and, together with a believer named Mrs. Wang, her son and three others, held a burial service for John and Betty Stam. The local citizens gathered to watch this burial and then Evangelist Lo preached a Gospel message to them.

Because rumors were flying that the Communist army was going to return to Miaosheo, Evangelist Lo and his wife took the baby and fled to Shanghai. Along the way they found local village women to nurse

the baby until they could deliver her to one of the CIM missionaries in Shanghai. The baby was ultimately reunited with Betty's parents.

There were many memorial services to honor John and Betty Stam's lives and ministry, including services at Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, and at Wilson College (Betty's alma mater) in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. Following the memorial service at Moody more than 700 students from Moody and another 200 from Wheaton College committed their lives to missionary service.

It can be said of John and Betty Stam that they were faithful, they knew the opposition, they held to the truth of God, they embraced suffering and even in death they walked in love and grace.

**John and Betty Stam did whatever it took to be faithful,
even giving their lives to spread the Gospel message around the world.**

Lesson 5: Whatever It Takes To Make The Most Of Every Opportunity – Missionary Story

Adoniram Judson (August 9, 1788 – April 12, 1850)

Adoniram Judson is one of the earliest American missionaries to leave the United States to take the Gospel to another country. In spite of his father being a pastor and him being reared in a very devout and Godly home, Adoniram became a deist while attending college and professed that he no longer believed in the existence of a personal God or Savior. Following his college graduation, Adoniram ran a school for a short time before going to New York City to become an actor.

An event that happened while he was traveling as an itinerant actor ultimately brought Adoniram back to the faith of his father. He was spending the night in a small inn and in the next room a man lay dying. Adoniram heard his groans most of the night. The next morning Adoniram asked the innkeeper at the desk about the man in the room next to him and learned that the man died before morning. Adoniram asked the man's name and was shocked to learn that the man who died was a friend of his. In fact, it was the friend who had influenced him to leave his childhood faith. Adoniram was stunned by the thought of what awaited this friend after death; and rather than continue his journey, he immediately returned to his father's home.

Judson enrolled at Andover, a newly founded divinity school. He did not enroll as a ministerial student but as a special student because he had not yet come to grips with his own relationship with God. It is said that he often took long walks in the woods behind the college and on December 8, 1808, he wrote in his journal that he had made a solemn dedication of his life to God. A few months later he made a public profession of his faith and joined the Congregational Church in Plymouth, Massachusetts, where his father was the pastor.

Several months after making that solemn dedication to God, he read a sermon by an Anglican chaplain for the East India Company in which the chaplain told of the need for the Gospel message in that part of the world. He also told of how he was advocating for missionaries to be allowed to come to the territories controlled by the East India Company. That sermon, along with a book about Burma that Judson read, influenced him greatly and it was not long until he determined that he should go as a missionary to India or Burma.

Over the next couple of years, Judson became part of a group of like-minded young men who had also determined that God's plan for their life was to take the Gospel to other countries around the world. A new Board for Foreign Missions was formed in June of 1810. This would prove to be a key event in Adoniram's journey to the foreign field as it would provide supporters as well as a sponsoring agency. That same month, Adoniram met Ann (Nancy) Hasseltine and at first sight fell in love with her. Just a little over a month after meeting her for the first time, Adoniram wrote to Nancy's father to ask if he could marry her. Mr. Hasseltine said that the decision was Nancy's to make, and he would support her no matter her decision. Suffice it to say that about 18 months later, Adoniram and Nancy were married and the next day, they along with Samuel Newell and his new wife, set sail on a small cargo ship headed for Calcutta.

The Judsons left America as Congregational missionaries. During the four-month voyage to Calcutta, Adoniram carefully studied the New Testament. His primary purpose was to discern the difference between the beliefs of the Congregationalists and the Baptists on the subject of baptism. His study brought him to the conviction that the Baptist view was correct. This was a hard thing for Judson because he knew that by taking this position, he would be cutting ties with his friends and his supporters. He and

Nancy agreed on this issue and after arriving in India, the Judsons asked William Carey's associate, William Ward to baptize them.

Making the decision to be baptized by immersion and to become Baptists resulted in Adoniram resigning from the Congregationalist American Board, which left them in a foreign country with no base of support and no sponsoring agency. In addition, even though the sermon that Adoniram had read about the East India Company's chaplain advocating for missionaries to come to that area, neither the East India Company nor the local authorities were friendly to new missionaries arriving there to preach the Gospel.

The political and government situation in India resulted in the Judsons not being allowed to stay in the country and their only option was to get on a boat headed to Rangoon, Burma. The trip to Burma was difficult and resulted in Nancy going into labor and delivering their first child who did not survive. This was only the first of many tragedies that Judson and his family experienced while in Burma. Nancy and two additional children born after they arrived in Burma, died and were buried in Burma. Adoniram and his second wife, Sarah Boardman Judson had eight children and three of them did not survive childhood. Sarah died shortly before her forty-second birthday. Emily Chubbuck Judson was Adoniram's third wife and she survived Adoniram by four years.

Despite suffering the many tragedies of death and being held in prison for 17 months in insufferable conditions, Judson's work in Burma was monumental.

Judson was diligent, disciplined and innovative. Initially after his arrival in Burma, he found it difficult to engage people in conversation because he was a foreigner. He noted that one of the customs of the Burmese men was to congregate in zayats. (Something like a tea house where men would gather for beverage and conversation.) So, Adoniram built a zayat on the street near his home to have a place where the Burmese men could gather and gave him the opportunity to have conversations with them. Long term this did not prove to be as successful as Adoniram thought that it would. However, it did provide an entrance into the community and two months after building the zayat, Adoniram baptized his first convert.

Judson is best known for translating the Bible into Burmese as well as creating an English/ Burmese dictionary which was long considered to be the standard and was widely used for many years. (Judson died before he completed the Burmese/English half of the dictionary.) However, Adoniram Judson never failed to make the most of every opportunity and to do whatever was necessary to share the Gospel with the people of Burma no matter whether they were village peasants, prison guards or the emperor himself.

Adoniram Judson did whatever it took to make the most of every opportunity to share the Gospel.

Lesson 6: Whatever It Takes To Pray – Missionary Story

George Muller (September 27, 1805 – March 10, 1898)

George Muller is known throughout the Christian community as a man of prayer. However, it is very interesting to note that his life started out on a different path. Born in Prussia in 1805, no mention is ever made of the family's religious views or convictions other than his father desired for him to become a clergyman. He wanted this not because he wanted George to serve God, rather he wanted that for George because at that time it was one of the more respectable and profitable professions. He also saw it as a good retirement plan for himself.

George's early years did not bode well for him becoming a clergyman. By the age of ten, he was known as a thief and a liar. He left his father's home as a young teen to continue his life of deception, lying and stealing. He landed in prison before he was 16. His father was finally notified of his incarceration and made restitution so that George would be released from prison. What George learned from his time in prison was how to be a better liar and do it more persuasively. He used those persuasive skills to get his father to send him to school at Nordhausen the next fall.

George did manage to conduct himself in an outward manner that gained him great favor with the principal of Nordhausen. However, this changed behavior was only an outward façade as he continued to live a secret, sinful lifestyle. It was not until he was 20 years old and agreed to attend a Bible study with a friend that his life began to change. As he read the Bible and attended Christian prayer meetings regularly, he came to realize the power of God and the power of prayer. This is what brought him to bow before God, confess his sin, accept Christ's gift of salvation and seek to follow God in all he did from that time forward. He began preaching in nearby churches and determined that he wanted to become a missionary.

It was his interest in reaching Jewish people with the Gospel that took Muller to England. However, God changed the direction of his ministry shortly after his arrival in England. Rather than ministering to the Jews, God allowed him opportunities to preach in different place and to different groups. God began teaching him the power of prayer. George learned that it was only by going to God in prayer, asking God what the people should hear and obeying God's direction for his sermon that people would listen to the sermons and their lives were changed.

One of the things that George began to pray earnestly about was his desire to be married. God answered his prayers by bringing Mary Groves into his life and they were married on October 7, 1830. Their marriage began with the practice of praying about everything. Together they made the decision to trust God for everything in their lives, including funds to live. George gave up his salary from the church, and trusted God for every need. They learned to trust God in the moments when He supplied in a mighty way, and in the moments when the answer to prayer did not come in the time or way they expected.

Through the work of an agency that Muller founded in England which provided various types of assistance to Christian schools, missionaries and orphans, God opened the door for Muller's life's work. God burdened his heart to pray for the orphans and as he prayed, God showed him that he was the one to build an orphanage. On December 5, 1835, while reading God's Word and praying about the need for an orphanage (so that he could provide for more than just the few that he and his wife could care for in their home), God spoke to him. He read Psalm 81:10, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." George believed that God was speaking to him directly about the orphanage. He immediately prayed and asked God for a building, for one thousand pounds and for suitable individuals to take care of the children. George was praying with purpose and he was praying boldly.

On December 7th he received the first shilling for the orphan house, on December 9th the first piece of furniture was given and on December 10th George received a letter from a couple offering their services to help manage the orphanage without a salary; they also offered all their furnishings and household goods to be used for the orphanage. On April 2, 1836 – just four months after George prayed that purposeful, bold prayer – the Orphan House was opened with seventeen children living in it. Ultimately, George Muller established orphanages that cared for as many as 2,000 orphans at any one time. Orphanages for babies, for younger children, and for older children.

Throughout his life George Muller continued to live a life of prayer – he was always diligent and humble in his prayers, never demanding that God do anything only trusting God to supply the needs in His time and in His way. Many times, George’s faith was tested as he waited expectantly for God to answer. One of the best-known stories of the faith of George Muller and the faithfulness of God to answer his prayers is told by a daughter of one of Muller’s workers. She often spent time at the orphanage. The children were all seated at the long dining table for morning prayer and breakfast. Only Muller and the workers knew that there was no bread, no milk, no food of any kind for the children to eat that morning. With the children seated at the table George in faith prayed and thanked God for the bread that He was going to give them to eat. Before Muller finished praying there was knocking at the door. It was the town baker who declared that he had not been able to sleep the night before because he was sure that God wanted him to bake bread for the children at the orphanage. He got out of bed, went to his kitchen and began to bake the bread he was now delivering. Muller accepted the bread and turned to the children and told them that they didn’t only have bread for breakfast – they had FRESH bread. Almost immediately there was another knock at the door. This time the person at the door was a man with a milk cart. The man told George that his milk cart had broken down on the road outside the orphanage and he couldn’t complete his deliveries. He asked if the orphanage could use the milk because it was going to spoil before he could get his cart repaired and complete his deliveries.

God honored George Muller’s humble prayer of thanksgiving that he prayed prior to the meal. God provided bread AND milk for the children. If God will honor the bold, humble prayer of George Muller that morning, He will also honor our prayers.

George Muller prayed for others needs as well and often gave to others out of his limited resources, especially to missionaries. He had often asked Hudson Taylor to pray for him and for the needs of the orphanages. There was a time when word came to George that Hudson Taylor had a great need as a result of riots that had destroyed much of his work in China. George wrote a letter to Hudson Taylor and included a check from his own meager bank account to help a fellow missionary in his time of need.

George Muller’s work was monumental. Several orphanages were built to care for England’s orphans. It is well documented that the children in the orphanages were happy, well cared for and educated in academics, music and the Word of God. However, his greatest legacy was his example of always being faithful in prayer. Praying with a purpose – asking God for a specific need, praying boldly, praying diligently without giving in to doubt and distrust. He also left us the example to pray with humility, and to pray with thanksgiving even when we can’t see the answer.

George Muller’s life exemplified whatever it takes to pray.

Lesson 7: Whatever It Takes To Reach People – Missionary Story

Fred and Effie Donnelson

(Fred: November 16, 1897 – February 9, 1974)

(Effie: December 22, 1898 – January 6, 1994)

Both Fred and Effie Donnelson were from Marshalltown, Iowa and both from solid Christian families. Fred accepted Christ as a young boy and Effie accepted Christ in her teen years. As young people they were active in church and it was no surprise to anyone when Fred said that God wanted him in full-time ministry. They married during their college years. Shortly before Fred's graduation, he became the pastor of Messiah Baptist Church in Chicago which proved to be a wonderful training ground for their future work in China. It was at Messiah Baptist Church that the Donnelsons met Mrs. Josephine Sweet, a missionary to China. God used Mrs. Sweet's testimony of the missionary work she and her husband had done in China to burden the Donnelsons' hearts to go to China as missionaries. (Mr. Sweet had died a few months earlier.)

Early in Fred Donnelson's Christian life, Genesis 14:13-15 became the passage that carried him through his entire ministry. He believed that when God told the Children of Israel to go forward that it was also a command to every Christian. He saw every "challenge" (other people might view it as an "obstacle") that came his way as an opportunity to trust God and to "Go Forward" in faith and determination. It was this faith, this determination to always trust God and go forward that carried he and his family through many challenging times in China.

On February 25, 1933, the Donnelson family which now included two small children, Paul and Lois, boarded The Empress of Canada headed for China. The family sold their possessions and with no promise of financial support, they were going forward to take the Gospel to China.

They arrived in Shanghai and were met by their friend, Mrs. Sweet, who was a great help to them in their early days in China. After a few weeks, the family took a train to Hangchow which would be their home and base of operations. When the train arrived in Hangchow, the Donnelson family and their belongings were loaded onto rickshaws. (It took several to carry the family of four, Mrs. Sweet and all the baggage.) The rickshaw coolies rushed them through the streets, shouting all the way. The Donnelsons thought they were telling people to get out of the way. In reality, they were shouting "Get out of the way; the foreign devils are coming!" Little did the people of Hangchow know that these strange looking people were not foreign devils, rather they were people who loved them and had come to give them the good news of Jesus.

A group of young men who had accepted Christ through Mr. Sweet's ministry and wanted to be trained for ministry were waiting for Mr. Donnelson to arrive and begin to teach them. Mr. Donnelson was immediately thrust into both learning the Chinese language and training these young men for ministry. This was a daunting challenge for Mr. Donnelson; however, he was not overwhelmed. He saw it as an opportunity to "Go Forward" to do whatever it took to take the Gospel to the Chinese people. After six months of study, Donnelson was able to preach his first sermon in Chinese. As his language skills improved, he began to travel to neighboring villages and establish new preaching stations always taking a group of the young men with him.

One of the tools that was very effective in the early years of the Donnelsons' ministry in China was a large tent which they would take into the villages and set up in an open space. The tent was easily seen and a bit of a curiosity as well, so people were drawn to it. In the mornings, Mr. Donnelson and his helpers would teach Bible lessons. In the afternoon, they would go out into the village visiting as many homes as they could to share the Gospel, inviting people to attend the evening service, which included

music and preaching. Countless people were brought to Christ in the early years because of the meetings under the tent where the core of the Gospel was presented.

The Donnelsons' ministry was flourishing in the midst of the enemy's distractions. The Sino-Japanese War broke out in 1937 creating great danger for the Donnelsons and everyone in the area. Often while they were conducting services or having prayer meetings bombers were flying overhead, dropping bombs on nearby transportation and military centers. Soon the Donnelson family was forced to escape Hangchow under the cover of darkness. They made their way to Shanghai and soon returned to the United States. As they reflected on their five years' work in China, they were thankful for 20 churches established in surrounding villages, scores of Chinese believers trained as workers in the ministry and hundreds had accepted Christ. Their hearts rejoiced over God's goodness and desire burned in their hearts to return to China as soon as possible.

They did return to China after only eight months in the United States. They located in Shanghai and established a Bible School with a program for both young men and young women. This school was conducted much like the tent ministry always presenting the core message of the Gospel – Jesus lived, died and rose again so that they might have eternal life. In the mornings, the students were in classes taught by Mr. Donnelson, the afternoons were spent visiting homes and sharing the Gospel with people and evangelistic services were held in the evenings. Mr. Donnelson also continued to oversee the “country works” that had been established during their first journey to China. Young Chinese ministers were teaching and preaching in the country churches. The country church ministry, the Bible School ministry and a church in Shanghai were all flourishing. And then came Pearl Harbor.

On Monday, December 8, 1941, the Donnelsons along with other American missionaries were ordered to appear in downtown Shanghai to register and to receive an armband that had to be worn at all times. It was not long before Japanese soldiers came to the Donnelson home and marked their furniture and personal items with an “X” Sticker. Under the threat of being shot, they were instructed to not move or remove any of the marked items. Soon Mr. and Mrs. Donnelson and Lois were taken as prisoners and put in an internment camp. (Their son, Paul, had returned to the United States only a month before to attend college.) In the few moments they were given to pack a few belongings when the soldiers came for them, Mrs. Donnelson noticed that her yellow curtains and a yellow bedspread had not been marked, she grabbed them and put them in her suitcase.

Approximately 1,100 people were confined at an internment camp where multiple families were forced to live together in one room. The room that was assigned to the Donnelsons was about 45 feet by 12 feet and they shared the space with five other families. There was no heat, only cots for sleeping and little food. The Donnelsons were fortunate to have a corner space with a window and Mrs. Donnelson found a way to use her yellow spread and matching curtains to create some privacy for their family. The Donnelsons appreciated the privacy and the others in their room appreciated the “cheeriness” that the yellow curtains brought to the room and deemed it the “sunshine corner”. Yet, it was more than the yellow curtains that brought the warmth – it was the warmth of the Gospel that the Donnelsons shared with the others confined in the camp. The sunshine corner was a place where anyone was welcomed and given an encouraging word and a time of prayer. Their lives, even in these dire circumstances, reflected Christ in a clear and simple manner. This small corner of that large room was “home” for the Donnelsons for two years and during that time they saw a number of people come to Christ.

Early in December 1943, word came that some of the women and children were going to be released from the internment. When Mr. Donnelson told his wife that her name and their daughter's name was on the list of those to be released, Mrs. Donnelson insisted to him that he would be released as well. She said that she knew that God was going to answer her prayers of keeping their family together. Two days later, Mr. Donnelson saw that a “supplemental” list had been posted and his name was on it!

It was a long and difficult trip back to the states. Mrs. Donnelson was so ill and weak that she had to be carried on a stretcher when they boarded the boat to leave Shanghai. However, it was great relief and joy that filled their hearts as they finally sailed by the Statue of Liberty. They were in America for two years before being allowed to return to China.

Early in December of 1945, Fred and Effie Donnelson again boarded a ship headed back to China for their third term and were welcomed “home” by a small band of Christian believers. Unfortunately, the Donnelsons were in China not quite three years before being forced to leave again due to the Communist invasion. However, the work remained, and the Chinese believers trained by the Donnelsons continued the work of reaching the people of China with the Gospel.

Leaving China did not end the Donnelsons’ efforts to take the Gospel to China and around the world. When they returned to the states after their third journey, they joined the faculty of a Bible College in Missouri where Mr. Donnelson was the head of the Missions Department and Mrs. Donnelson was Dean of Women. Countless young people surrendered their lives to Christ to take the Gospel around the world under the ministry of Mr. and Mrs. Donnelson.

Fred and Effie Donnelson’s lives are examples of doing whatever it takes to reach people with the Gospel.