

## What's the Difference?

John G. Paton was called to reach the land of the New Hebrides (now the country of Vanuatu). It's an archipelago of islands to the east of Australia. However, the inhabitants at the time were a little bit less than welcoming. He wasn't the first one to encounter these people, which is what led to this interaction between Mr. Paton and a church member. He tells the story like this:

Among many who sought to deter me, was one dear old Christian gentleman, whose crowning argument always was, "The cannibals! You will be eaten by cannibals!" At last, I replied, "Mr. Dickson, you are advanced in years now, and your own prospect is soon to be laid in the grave, there to be eaten by worms; I confess to you, that if I can but live and die serving and honoring the Lord Jesus, it will make no difference to me whether I am eaten by cannibals or by worms."

What difference does it make to our bodies after we are called home to be with the Lord? Missions and evangelism are two things that we cannot do in heaven. John Paton has the proper view of our temporary shell and finite time. Oftentimes, we seem to view our earthly lives as the ultimate time to enjoy all that this world has to offer. The New Testament however provides us with a new perspective and a new calling. God's desire is for us to look beyond this earthly life into eternity, evaluating all that we have been given here and its purposes. When we understand this, we will make provisions to do in this life what we cannot do in the next: missions and evangelism.

The apostle Paul also understood this manner of living when he wrote to the church in Galatia, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). He lived a life obedient to the command that is to be obeyed; under God's authority, go and make disciples. He didn't delay. He wasn't concerned of what people think of him. He left his social status, his riches, his family, and his home to reach those who have not yet heard the name of Christ. He counted the cost and considered it worth it for Christ.

As the GO Team was preparing for the conference this weekend, we certainly had this purpose in mind. We prayed that the Lord may impress upon our hearts to live with such a mindset, and "heart-set". Not just for one or two of us, but for our church as a whole, and then particularly that the Lord may call and separate out one or two, to be sent obediently to the unreached peoples of this world.

On behalf of the team, I certainly thank all of you for attending and participating in the conference. We trust and hope that you were blessed, challenged, and refreshed by our visiting speaker and missionaries. Now, we pray that we obediently live with the eternal perspective in mind.