

GOD DESIRES HIS

house of prayer

by **Ben Zobrist**

My Background

I am a son of the US Center for World Mission legacy. I was born and raised in Pasadena, CA and grew up with the Pasadena Campus in my backyard (my childhood home is situated just south of Mott Auditorium). My parents, Bill and Jill Zobrist, served on staff with the FMF (Frontier Mission Fellowship) in the 80s and 90s. God's heart for the nations became a reality to me from a young age. In elementary school I went on my first cross cultural mission trip to serve the poor in Mexico. During middle school I travelled to Ghana (West Africa) in the summer and then to Uruguay (South America) in the winter. In high school I travelled to Mexico, Colombia, Nigeria, and Benin. By sixteen years of age I had graduated from high school and traveled to over a half dozen nations.

The Millennial Generation

Though my early experience of international travel and mission work might be rare to some, modern technology has provided the millennial generation (Gen Y) with international exposure surpassing every previous generation. Whether it was chatting on AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) in the late 90s or texting today on iMessage or WhatsApp this generation is able to access the majority of people from every nation of the earth. Thousands of young people have crossed borders on short-term mission experiences. In addition to international exposure, the millennial generation is commonly known by our interest in social justice. Consider this millennial Jewish Rabbi's perspective:

“We are a generation overwhelmingly dedicated to social justice. Where there is injustice, we want to respond, whether in-person, online, or through power of the purse— even when it is that of a teenager who gives what little he can. This impulse can be religiously motivated, much as it has been for me. Yet for many, it is rooted in a fundamental belief in the goodness of people.” *(Editors Note: Belief in the inherent goodness of people comes from a Marxist, or secular humanist perspective, not the Bible.)*¹

I am grateful for my generation's access to the nations and our dedication to justice. However, is the international exposure and interest in social justice drawing my generation into the heart of God to make Jesus Christ known and loved by every tribe, tongue, nation, and people? It is my conviction that international exposure is not enough. The millennial commitment to justice is not sufficient because social justice does not equate to biblical justice—proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom with the works of the kingdom. In this article I will present my reflections on frontier mission work from a Gen Y perspective.

Understanding God's Desire for this Generation

Even with my extensive travel and mission exposure I was convinced I would not serve overseas as a missionary. I loved mission work, but I felt it wasn't for me. There are many Christian millennials like me who had experienced short-term mission work and



yet had not committed to the work of world mission. What is needed to captivate the heart of the millennial generation to know God's purpose for the nations? I learned that loving God leads to loving nations. It is a passionate pursuit of God that will result in a passionate love and commitment to the unreached peoples of the earth.

In the last decade the Global Church has experienced great increase in prayer—the rumblings of intercession and the fragrance of worship. God has been reminding his people of the ancient name he gave us, his House of Prayer (Isaiah 56:7). The Church has been and will always be the House of Prayer. When Jesus entered the temple in Jerusalem He prophesied the eternal identity of God's people: *“Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations?’”* (Mark 11:17). This was not a new revelation that Jesus gave in the first century and this is not a new revelation that the Holy Spirit is giving to our generation today. The Apostle Peter put it this way, *“You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”* (1 Peter 2:5). Our highest calling in life is to be a priest—living a life of prayer before God.


The primary desire of God's heart is for true worshippers in spirit and truth (John 4:23). Every movement (mission, prayer, church planting, disciple making, etc) finds its origin in the heart of God. God desires the hearts of people. God desires worship among the nations. God desires his House of Prayer.

I am convinced that the primary reason God is raising up the House of Prayer movement across the earth is to finish the task of world evangelization. One might ask, *“What does the prayer movement have to do with the mission movement?”* Everything! Every unreached/

unengaged people group is living in a culture of prayer and devotion: Hinduism, Buddhism, and the most obvious— Islam. Each of these socio-religious cultures is rooted in prayer and devotion to a deity. I believe that the Holy Spirit is equipping the Church with a vibrant culture of prayer. God desires that his House of Prayer would be established among every unreached people group and nation.

The House of Prayer movement is God's divine contextualization strategy. I believe God's desire for this generation is to raise up worship and prayer in every place of the earth among all peoples and nations (Psalm 57). It is the prayer movement of adoration and devotion to Jesus that will impact all other prayer movements on the earth— those of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism.

The final frontier of mission work among unreached peoples will not be accomplished without a lifestyle of prayer—fragrant worship and interceding with insight and authority. The Millennial Generation has been given a divine invitation to prepare the earth for the return of Jesus. In every place where the gospel is being proclaimed there will be a movement of lavish worship and devotion to Jesus Christ.

“For from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; In every place incense shall be offered to My name, and a pure offering; For My name shall be great among the nations.” Says the Lord of hosts.”
(Malachi 1:11). 

¹ Stanton, Rabbi Joshua. Rabbi Joshua Stanton to Huffington Post newsgroup, “Social Justice in the Millennial Generation,” February 17, 2013. Accessed December 26, 2014. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/joshua-stanton/social-justice-in-the-mil_b_2708224.html.

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