

The Lemon Family 2026—The root of our direction over the past 20 years

The Missionary Ministry of Paul—A Model of Diverse Faithful Work and Foundation for Indirect Restricted Access Church Planting.

In 1999, Kristin and I surrendered to full-time missions, though the clarity of that calling did not unfold until 2004. It was while serving in a village in remote Alaska, that the Lord gave what we have often described as our *Macedonian call* from South Korea—“**Will you come help?**”

For years we knew the Lord's specific call to a task, but we did not know his specific direction. We searched the Scriptures for God's direction, but the path did not come into clear view until we were preparing for deputation in 2005. It was during that season that the phrase “**to Korea and Beyond**” first took shape. At the time, we had no idea how significant that simple statement would become in the years ahead and how many different people groups and lands it would lead us to.

What follows is the biblical premise for how the Lord has led us for more than twenty years. This is not only our testimony—it is also a general biblical synopsis helpful for anyone studying how God calls, separates, and sends His servants. Just as the Holy Ghost separated Barnabas and Saul in Acts 13 and later “sent them forth,” the Lord likewise called us, separated us, and then sent us forth to accomplish our fivefold objective, **which is simply our part in Christ's promise: “I will build MY church.”**

Our Fivefold Objective: (specific calling)

To see people

1. Saved
2. Baptized
3. Added to a local New Testament church
- 4. Discipled!**
5. Given a place to serve and multiply themselves

For two decades, as we have traveled from country to country and church to church, our desire has remained the same: to be faithful to the calling and direction the Lord has given us. The Lord has directed us to **Korea and Beyond**, and although Scripture definitely includes examples of God calling individuals to specific foreign locations for long-term pastoral ministries, in our case the call was not primarily to a single “piece of dirt.” His call was to a **biblical assignment—a task to accomplish**—with a broad people group at the center of it.

Over time, the “Beyond” portion of our ministry has become increasingly defined. The Lord has narrowed that direction to include **the saints scattered throughout** (1 Peter 1:1) and **restricted-access peoples**—those more difficult to reach through status-quo missions efforts. In many ways, our calling fits more than one of the categories outlined in the study below, sometimes overlapping and sometimes blending uniquely.

My hope is that this introduction makes the path forward clear as we continue to follow what the Lord has **called and directed** us to do—both in the past and as we move forward.

Patterns of Missions (brief outline)

I. Planting Churches in Person

- Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-4): About 3 weeks; Paul planted a church and taught in the synagogue.
- Corinth (Acts 18:1-11): 18 months; Paul founded the church, disciplined believers, and wrote letters.
- Ephesus (Acts 19:8-10): About 3 years; Paul taught daily, planted a strong church, and sent out disciples.

II. Strengthening Established Churches/revisiting brethren.

- Antioch (Acts 11:25-26): 1 year; Paul taught and co-led an established church.
- Acts 15:36-41: Paul and Silas revisited the brethren and churches across cities, confirming and encouraging them.
- Macedonia and Greece (Acts 20:1-3): Around 3 months; Paul revisited and strengthened existing churches.
- Troas (Acts 20:6-12): About a week; Paul taught and encouraged the church, raising Eutychus.

III. Working 2×2 — Scriptural Pattern of Team Ministry

- Jesus sent His disciples out two by two (Mark 6:7), providing the model.
- Paul followed this pattern consistently with Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Titus, and others.
- This approach provided accountability, encouragement, reproducibility, and protection.
- Missions is cooperative—workers confirming, strengthening, and multiplying together.

IV. Writing Letters to Guide from Afar--credited as a leader

- Colossae (Colossians 1:7-8): Paul LIKLEY ,,,,never visited; he wrote to guide the church started by Epaphras, a convert of Paul likely during his time at Ephesus.
- Rome (Romans 1:11-12): Paul had not met them yet; he wrote to establish their faith and prepare for a future visit.
- Corinth (1 & 2 Corinthians): Though he planted it, his letters addressed challenges while away.

V. Sending Others to Plant or Lead Churches

- Colossae (Colossians 1:7): Epaphras, Paul's disciple, planted the church while Paul worked elsewhere.
- Crete (Titus 1:5): Paul left Titus to appoint elders and organize the church.
- Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3): Paul left Timothy in charge to strengthen the church after Paul moved on.

VI. Preparing for Future Mission Fields

- Rome (Romans 15:20-24): Paul aspired to visit where he had not yet preached; his ambition was to extend the gospel to new regions.

- Spain (Romans 15:24): Paul aimed to go beyond Rome, always looking to disciple in new areas.

VII. Encouraging Personal Connection and Mutual Encouragement

- Rome (Romans 1:11-12): Paul desired mutual encouragement; he longed to strengthen and be strengthened.
- General (Philippians 1:3-5): Paul gave thanks for churches, prayed for them, and expressed deep affection even when apart.

VIII. Suffering and Ministry Under Restriction

- Rome Under House Arrest (Acts 28:16-31): About 2 years; Paul wrote letters (e.g., Ephesians, Philippians) and welcomed all who came to him.
- General (2 Corinthians 11:23-28): Paul endured suffering, yet continued ministry through letters, co-workers, and prayer.

Conclusion

Paul's life was defined by faithfulness. Though he bore a thorn in the flesh (2 Corinthians 12:7-9) and rarely stayed long in one place, it is **not productivity we celebrate**, but **obedience to God's** ever-changing direction. He no doubt heard, "**Well done, thou good and faithful servant**" (Matthew 25:21). Scripture reminds us, "To obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22). When we attempt to box missions into a measurable, chartable metric, we miss that faithfulness is the true goal. Paul reveals missions as dynamic—planting, strengthening, writing, enduring. It was all part of the "I will build MY church". In all, he glorified Christ and built the church in their location, whether he was actually there or not.

Our objective from the beginning has always been: to see people saved, baptized, added to a local New Testament church, discipled, and given a place to serve and multiply themselves. This is what God has called us to do. This is what we will continue to do **wherever we are directed**.

Special note: Doctrinal Basis for Indirect Church Planting in Restricted Access Fields

Our philosophy of ministry recognizes a clear New Testament pattern: churches are often established as the direct result of faithful Gospel preaching and personal discipleship, even when the **missionary himself does not, or cannot, permanently reside or pastor in that location**.

These above examples demonstrate that biblical church planting **does not always require a missionary to rent a building, hold permanent residence, or serve as the long-term pastor**. Rather, through faithful Gospel proclamation, discipleship, doctrinal instruction, and the training of national believers (2 Timothy 2:2), the Lord raises up indigenous leadership and establishes churches. ('I will build MY church')

In Restricted Access Missions—where public facilities may be impossible and open assembly limited—our aim remains consistent with the New Testament missionary model: to preach Christ, disciple believers, strengthen both open and restricted assemblies, **provide Scripture and sound doctrine**, and assist in the formation of self-governing local churches under national leadership. The missionary plants and/or waters...but "God gave the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:6).