

# Goer or Sender?

## Find Your Role in God's Plan

An exciting truth to learn as a world Christian is that each of us has a God-designated role in his global plan to reclaim the earth for His glory. How do we find our personal place in that plan? Where do you and I fit?

### Definitions:

- **World Christian:** Someone who commits their time, talents, and possessions to be used daily as effectively as possible for the advancement of the kingdom of God. This means becoming informed about the many unreached peoples of the world and taking an active role in the task of reaching them, through prayer, sending others, and/or going oneself.
- **Goer:** Someone who believes God has called them to carry the gospel cross-culturally, as a full-time occupation. Sometimes referred to as a missionary; this kind of missionary leaves the comforts of home and the familiarity of their culture to spread the message of salvation in Christ to those culturally distinct from them in foreign lands.
- **Sender:** Someone who deems their most important contribution to world evangelization to be staying in their home country and living in such a way as to support most effectively the maximum number of "goers" as they are able. This does not preclude their primary involvement in world evangelization as expressed by their reaching the lost around them.

### The Cast of Characters

In God's plan, there are two basic categories which we want to examine. These are senders and goers. Most people believe that there is a very small number of Christians who are called to be missionaries, or goers. This leaves all the rest, ipso facto, as senders.

Not true. You see, just as surely as God calls some to go, He calls others to stay. And what he desires most of all is your obedience.

### The Profile of a Goer

How do you know if you are to be a goer? First, you may find that you have a burden for peoples of other cultures to come to the Lord. More than that, you have a desire to take the gospel message to them.

Goers often feel inadequate for the task. They struggle with the thought of leaving family and friends behind. Sometimes they even wish they had a good paying job and could buy all the "niceties" of life.

What keeps them going is a driving desire for God to receive the full glory due him from all the nations and for all peoples to have the opportunity to hear the gospel. It makes the sacrifices worth it.

Goers have heard all the statistics of how many are lost without Christ and have brought that need to the Lord in prayer. This very act of considering the need and praying for a solution has led them to be the solution. The Lord of the harvest has spoken clearly. The goer goes forth in obedience to His command.

### **The Profile of a Sender**

The sender must be just as sure of his call as the goer. It is a call to counter-cultural living. Our culture calls us to live for self, but the sender lives for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom.

Like the goer, the sender has a burden for peoples of other cultures to come to the Lord. But having assessed how God has shaped him and the place that God has called him to fill in the body, the sender concludes that he can best advance the kingdom by sending others.

A sender may be a business man who leads his family in living a simple lifestyle so they can support several missionaries. Or a sender may be a missions-minded pastor who knows he is called to remain in his country, but works hard to motivate his congregation to be effective senders and to raise up goers from their midst. A sender may be a professor who trains those who go. Or a blue-collar laborer who devotes several hours weekly to praying for several missionaries.

A sender isn't a washed-out missionary or a goer who never made it. God calls us all to be involved in world evangelization and He calls many to be senders in His plan.

### **Sender or Goer?**

How do you decide if you're called to be a sender or a goer? Here are some guidelines:

- Seek the Lord with all your heart. Ask him to purify your motives and ambitions, so that you do nothing out of guilt or selfish ambition.
- Ask the Lord to give you his heart for the lost. Let Him break your heart with their needs.
- Check out all the options available to you.
  - ~What could you do overseas?
  - ~Where could you serve?
  - ~What kind of an impact do you think you might have overseas?
  - ~What can you do in your country?
  - ~What kind of an impact might you have at home?
  - ~What might be your potential sending ministry?
- Evaluate where you might be most effective: as a sender or as a goer.
- Discuss your findings with those who know you well: parents, pastor, campus ministry staff, professors, close friends. Ask them what they think your spiritual gifts are and where they think you'd do well serving the body of Christ.
- Make a decision and go for it!

## **The Call**

Someone once said, "If God calls you to be a missionary, don't stoop to be a king." To be anything other than what God calls you to be is to be less than what He calls you to be. And if God puts the desire in you to be a missionary, you won't find satisfaction in doing anything else. You may come to this conclusion by looking at all the facts and realizing that your only legitimate response is to become a goer. Or you may come to it by getting some kind of sense from the Lord that this is what you are to do. Once you make the decision that you are called to overseas ministry and the Lord confirms it, don't be swayed. Walk in obedience to the revealed will of God for your life.

Then again, after hearing the facts, seeing the needs, and praying for wisdom, you may come to the conclusion that your best contribution would be as a sender. Don't feel second-rate. Don't seek to explain to all the goers why you feel you should stay. Show them why you are staying by being the best sender you can be for the glory of God. Don't get sucked into self-fulfillment and our culture's system of satisfaction. Live for the glory of God among the nations.

God has a global plan. Each of us has a role to play in it. It may be as a sender or a goer. What is your role? Are you committed to playing your part?

Source: Caleb Project, n.d., 2010 Pioneers.

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