

# Sending Missionaries To The Future

by Tony Kummer

Last week I watched a documentary about my city. It included video footage from the early 1930s. Several clips showed children at local elementary schools lining up for school dismissal. These boys and girls had bright eyes and faces full of hope. Many of them looked familiar and I almost expected to see kids from my church mixed into the crowd. Then it struck me.



Those sweet faces in the video are gone – their long lives have been spent. All that they thought or did is now past. This bothered me and I desperately wanted to hear their stories. What were their names? Did they live good lives? What joys and sorrows did they know? Did they find the love of Jesus? But that video is all I will ever know about them. These were only images snatched from time.

In the same way, my life will pass away. The children of tomorrow will know nothing about me. If the Lord gives me grandchildren, I cannot expect that their children will know much about me. At most, they will only see an old photograph and be told that I was a pastor. The shortness of life is a wall that we cannot climb over. It divides us from all who will come after us. Because of our fallen world, we live on islands in time.

*Should we give up and let despair win out?* Certainly not – by God's mercy there is much we can do in the here-and-now to have an impact on tomorrow. I came up with two ways we are connected with tomorrow's children.

**1. We are connected through the children of today.** The children we teach will go places that we can never go. They will serve God & fellow man in ways that we can only imagine. They will live on after us, and teach the children we will never know. We minister to children for their sake, *and* for the sake of the children to come. This is how God sees our ministry. Psalm 78 talks about teaching the next generation so that their children will arise and tell their children. In this way we pass on our hope in God. When we minister to children now, we are sending missionaries to the children of the future.

**2. We are connected through our prayers.** We cannot cross over time to help tomorrow's children, but our prayers are not bound by time. Our God lives forever and we must seek his help. He can raise up teachers after we are gone. He can send the good news into their lives. But we can be a part of that work, because God is pleased to do all this according to our prayers. In a very real sense, God can honor our requests and bring salvation to these children not yet born. Even when our short lives are spent, our prayers will not be exhausted. Even when we are long forgotten, God will remember and show his glory according to those prayers.

*What attitude should we have about this work?* Think about the shortness of life, the certainty of your own death, and the hope of the Gospel. Then resolve to make a difference. Pray and teach in such a way that tomorrow's children will put their hope in God.