

# *Overcoming The Mountain*

A MANUAL FOR THE PRE-FIELD  
MINISTRY OF DEPUTATION



NICK ZARRELLA

**OVERCOMING THE  
MOUNTAIN**

**A Manual for the Pre-Field  
Ministry of Deputation**

**By Nicholas Zarrella**

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# Dedication

I dedicate this book to the Lord Jesus Who, by His grace, called me to the mission field of Japan and my wife, Lorena, for her strength and faith in endeavoring to care for our home and ministry.

Nicholas Zarrella, Master of Divinity

October 2021

# Foreword

On more than one occasion, I, like you, have discovered the truth Solomon wrote about in Ecclesiastes 12 when he said, “Of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.” Especially have I, like you, discovered this with books about ministry. Books that promise delight, but become a weariness because of a lack of depth, understanding, and practical application.

On other occasions, I have discovered the opposite side of the truth coin when Solomon wrote about acceptable or delightful words; words written with truth and application to bring blessing, direction and stability to one’s life. These are the words that you will read in “Overcoming the Mountain: A Manual for the Pre-field Ministry of Deputation.” Missionary Nick Zarrella has written a passionate, purposeful, and practical manual to help pastors, missionaries, and the church understand the ministry of Pre-field Deputation.

As I sit to write this foreword, our church has received multiple letters of resignation from missionaries that we support. Some have been on the field already and some on deputation. I cannot help but think if they could have read this book what a help it would have been to them. I once heard a pastor say, “Preparation is paramount to preventing the enemy.” I believe “Overcoming the Mountain” is needed preparation for both the pastor and missionary. The practical teaching comes from a missionary’s heart and experiences

and flows easily into personal application that will help our missionaries overcome the mountain of deputation.

I know you will be blessed reading this book and I am excited to see how God will use it in the lives of those called to missions.

Pastor Thomas A. Hunter Jr.

Plantation Baptist Church

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# Preface

When my family and I first commenced deputation, there was a shadowy image in my mind of the expectations of what was forthcoming. I had attended seminary, served in full-time ministry, and underwent missionary candidate school, but there remained a thick fog that surrounded the ministry. What was its overall purpose? How was it possible to raise the astronomical amount of financial support? Who was going to schedule with us to present our call? When would we finally arrive on the field? What were we expected to do when presenting in a church? Why did the Lord make it that we had to undergo this arduous climb? While our heart was in Japan, our bodies had to remain behind in America until we conquered this mountainous task called deputation.

It was during our travel that the Lord opened my eyes to the answering of these questions. Furthermore, through His wisdom I learned how to meet both the expectations of Scripture and of modern-day local churches unto the reaping of fruit for our ministry. While it is said that most missionaries receive partnerships with around 33% of the churches in which they present, we were seeing upwards of 75-80%. Even many pastors who welcomed us in with the caveat that they would not be able to partner with us, voted following the services to support our ministry. What was different? How were we receiving such gain?

It was through the observations of other missionary presentations wherein I noticed certain patterns, both positive

and negative, that lead to either a profitable climb or an intense struggle on the rock face. It was then that the inspiration for writing this book was realized. While this writing is not guaranteeing the missionary an increased percentage of partnerships per visit (God alone brings the increase), the Lord had placed within me a desire to assist future missionaries in answering the shadowy questions of their heart, easing the burden of the ministry, and preparing them to better represent Christ and missions in the local churches of America unto the conquering of the mountain of deputation. I pray that this book has accomplished these purposes.

# Introduction

Has one ever gazed before the face of a great and majestic mountain? It truly is magnificent to not only behold, but also to compare oneself to the sheer mass and magnitude of God's creation. What then if the task was not simply to gaze upon its being, but also to scale and overcome it? The process of deputation can be likened to the ascent and descent of such a great mountain. At the outset, standing at the mighty face of a behemoth task with the goal of conquering it seems impossible; as does raising the thousands of dollars of support required to reach the mission field. Even simply the visions of finally setting foot amongst the people of calling are eclipsed by the presence lying ahead. The purpose of this book is to give answer to the biblical and practical reasonings for deputation and to better prepare the missionary to efficiently and effectively "conquer" this mountainous ministry in the power of the Lord.

Missionary work is exhilarating and intimidating as one fantasizes about living and ministering amongst a foreign people. I have personally spoken to several individuals who have expressed a hunger and felt God's convicting call, but were nervous, or even turned away, at the thought of deputation. One can understandably sympathize. There has been very little accessible study or information disseminated for the regular church member. To the devil's delight, most of what has circulated are the horror stories that some missionaries have experienced while on the road. Certainly,

horror stories do exist (some are unquestionably embellished), but they occur far less often than what is commonly perpetuated. Rather, I wish it were the many rich and wonderful blessings that would ring in the ears of God's people.

While moving forward in faith requires a complete trust in the Lord Who knows the "rockface," there is peace and comfort in gaining the general wisdom of the process as one prepares for the conquest ahead. Therefore, this manual will unpack that information by serving as a basic guide map for the ascent and descent of the mountain. While every missionary has commonalities and unique characteristics that are intricately woven by God, even these elements can be fine-tuned to fit the descriptions founded in this manual for one's personal life and deputation ministry. I pray the content is a blessing, an encouragement, a bolstering for the current state of missions, and an open door for those who are nervous, but yearning to surrender to God's calling on their lives.

# Chapter 1

## The Call to the Field

Bill McChesney was a missionary to the Congo. It was at 28 years of age that rebel forces had captured the malaria-weakened young man and proceeded to beat him to death. One of the lasting tributes of his life was a poem he wrote entitled "My Choice,"

I want my breakfast served at "eight,"  
with ham and eggs upon the plate;  
A well-broiled steak I'll eat at "one;"  
and dine again when day is done.  
I want an ultramodern home,  
and in each room a telephone;  
Soft carpets, too, upon the floors,  
and pretty drapes to grace the doors.  
A cozy place of lovely things,  
like easy chairs and innersprings,  
And then I'll get a small TV –  
of course, "I'm careful what I see."  
I want my wardrobe, too, to be  
of neatest, finest quality.  
With latest style of suit and vest,  
why shouldn't Christians have the best?  
But then the Master I can hear,  
in no uncertain voice, so clear,

“I bid you come and follow Me,  
the lonely Man of Galilee.”  
“Birds of the air have made their nest,  
and foxes in their holes find rest;  
But I can offer you no bed;  
no place have I to lay My head.”  
In shame I hung my head and cried. How  
could I spurn the Crucified?  
Could I forget the way He went,  
the sleepless nights in prayer He spent?  
For forty days without a bit,  
alone He fasted day and night;  
Despised, rejected – on he went,  
and did not stop till veil He rent.  
A man of sorrows and of grief,  
no earthly friend to bring relief –  
“Smitten of God,” the prophet said –  
Mocked, beaten, bruised, His blood ran red.  
If He be God and died for me,  
no sacrifice too great can be  
For me, a mortal man, to make;  
I’ll do it all for Jesus’ sake.  
Yes, I will tread the path He trod.  
No other way will please my God;  
So, henceforth, this my choice shall be,  
my choice for all eternity.

I believe the life of Bill McChesney and the content of his words echo the very heart of those surrendered unto Christ’s call. Missionaries have labored in the jungles, in the

country-sides, in the cities. They have taught amongst the tribes, the civilized, the radical. They have endured persecutions, and hardships, and death. They have withstood the most fiery of darts for which the devil holds in his arsenal. Hands and feet have bled and lives have been lost. Most have never even seen the blessed end result of their earthy labors for Christ; having passed on before the bearing of fruit. All performed simply for the opportunity to heed the call of Christ in carrying His cross and His Word to the distant highways and byways of the lost and spiritually dead. The missionary is a living sacrifice, a servant to the King, a voice in the wilderness that the name of God might resound in the uttermost parts. What a mighty work it is! But where does it all begin? How do men like Bill McChesney set their vision upon the road of cross-cultural ministry?

The genesis of the work commences when the man of God dies to the self and lives unto the Lord. When an individual places the strivings of fleshly pursuit under submission to the Spirit of the Living God that one might live out His will in service to a people group; either domestic or foreign. As any Christ-abiding servant acknowledges, the Christian is not to defer to his own path, but is to set forth toward wheresoever and unto whosoever the Master commands. As I traveled throughout deputation, the following was often asked, "Why Japan?" It is a legitimate question; one which demands an answer that ought to meet the criteria for a God-called missionary. The following biblical principles will shed light on how to answer this question properly.

## **The Biblical Call of the Missionary**

It is often stated that all Christians are missionaries, but this is simply not true; at least in the context of the specific biblical call. While all Christians are commanded to witness of the Lord Jesus, there are those specifically set apart and called by God to full-time missional labor. It is a similar thought process to evangelism or discipleship. While all Christians are called to evangelize, there are those specifically set apart and called by God to full-time evangelistic labor. While all Christians are to make disciples, there are those specifically set apart and called by God to Pastor a flock. I believe it is vitally important to comprehend this distinction between the general term and the specifically called because if the church is not careful, they will send those which are profoundly sincere, but not commissioned by God unto the peoples of the world based on the general principle that “we are all missionaries.” Essentially, if all Christians are missionaries, then no one is a missionary. As the calling of an Evangelist and Pastor finds source in the Lord, full-time missional work must never simply be a good idea to fulfill based upon a general principle. It must be regarded as a specific calling of God placed upon certain of His servants to go and minister to the unreached people groups of the world.

The biblical accounts of surrendering to missionary work were not founded on an individual's personal impulses, of an honest and passionate sincerity, nor even of simply yearning to reach the lost. While some or all of these are secondary reasonings, they cannot be the mainstay. The predominant factor in the biblical prescription for entering full-time missionary service as displayed in the Bible was

when the very Word of God was voiced unto those He had called to the labor fields and were then, in the New Testament, authorized by a local church to serve as their representative. It is a heavenly calling, a divine consigning, by the power and authority of the Lord Jesus Christ upon certain individuals to enter a spiritual work that is carried out beyond the walls of one's physical, local church body. Though the biblical missionaries were passionate and loving, it was not their emotions that were driving them, but the authority of the Lord and their sending church.

### **The Source of Calling is God**

The Source of the missionary calling may be clarified through the words of my professor. He stated, "The predominant factor in being a missionary is not in the salvation of the heathen. If the reason you are going is for the heathen, then the reason you leave is because of the heathen. Isaiah said, 'Send me' Why? 'Because mine eyes hath seen the King, the Lord of hosts.'" His words have long had an impact on my heart. Why Japan? It is not because I find my strength and calling in the people of that nation. I love them and greatly desire for their eyes to turn unto the Lord, but the reason for my going is because Christ Jesus Himself had plucked me out of following my own will and called me to those fields of labor. Missionary attrition today is a real and increasing problem. It is certainly likely that a major reason for this is because many that are surrendering are doing so because of a burden for a people, but yet are not divinely appointed. A burden will only take a man so far past the starting line, but it has no power to sustain. The words of my

professor find their source in the Bible and it is important to demonstrate from His Word that the call to the field must flow from the spring of Christ's will.

### **The Call of Ezekiel - Ezekiel 3**

Ezekiel, a contemporary alongside of Daniel and Jeremiah, was called to preach to the Jewish people during the rise of the Babylonian Empire. During this time period, the nation of Babylon had twice invaded Judah, the Southern tribe of Israel, effectively taking many citizens captive. While Daniel and his companions were enslaved to serve in the Babylonian courts, Ezekiel was delivered to the refugee camps.

The purpose of Ezekiel's prophetic ministry was to proclaim of the coming fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, the total annihilation of the city for the sin of the people, and then the hope and restoration to come in the future Kingdom of God. Ezekiel chapter 3 is the key focal point of this section because it emphasizes God's call for his prophet. In this chapter, the Lord fills Ezekiel with His Word (*Eat this roll*) and then commands him to preach that Word to His people in the refugee camps (*Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them*). In the midst of his call, God informs him that the people will not only refuse to heed the Word, but will also make themselves harder than stone in rejection toward his ministry (*for they will not hearken...as an adamant harder than flint*). He is then carried by the spirit to the River of Chebar to observe the sin of the people he is to deliver God's Word, but the Bible declares he

went *in bitterness* and *in the heat of my spirit*. There was an intense bitterness and rage that fumed internally within his spirit. I think it possible to sympathize with these strong emotions. It was painful to hear from God Himself that the people both he and the Lord loved, the people he was called to deliver the Word of God unto, would outright reject His message in venomous opposition. He was angry for their stiff-necked rejection, grieved for their blatant sin, and burdened for their refusal to hear from the Lord their God. Yet, even in this emotional state, the Bible ends verse 14 by declaring, "*but the hand of the Lord was strong upon me.*"

This most important verse perfectly blends with my seminary professor's declaration. If Ezekiel's call was predominantly founded in his desire for the salvation of the Jewish heathen, he would have been consumed by his bitterness and rage. If the heathen were his reason for preaching, the heathen would have been his reason for leaving the ministry. He loved the people and desired for them to repent, but it could not have been solely his great love for them that strengthened him. As it was the Lord Who called him, it was the Lord Who sustained him. Ezekiel was fortified to press on not by the hand of men, but of God; likewise, must the contemporary missionary.

### **The Vision for the Gentiles - Acts 10-11:18**

In the early development of New Testament missionary work, the Lord had called upon Peter to serve as His vessel for the receiving of Gentiles into the fold of Christ. Peter and the Jewish believers had not yet fully adopted the

plan of God in the reception of non-Jews; hence, their strong contention in these chapters.

During a time of prayer, God placed him in a trance in which he witnessed a vessel descending upon the earth; wherein were all manner of animals, common and unclean. The Lord had commanded him to slay and eat, to which he refused on basis of keeping Mosaic Law. God had then informed him that He had cleansed these creatures, thus they were viable to consume. This vision occurred a total of three times, ensuring its divine establishment. While Peter pondered on its interpretation, a Gentile, Cornelius, approached him.

The account develops that Peter obeyed the Lord, the Gospel was preached, and the Gentiles received the Holy Spirit. The issue arrives in Acts 11 when word of his actions had reached the ears of certain Jews in Jerusalem. The Bible records that these contending Jews were *of the circumcision*. They still held tightly to the Mosaic Law, not yet fully comprehending that Christ had fulfilled it. Therefore, they contended with Peter in his eating and fellowshiping with uncircumcised Gentiles. Peter's response is absolutely vital for missionary calling because it highlights the divine reasoning for his work. The Scriptures record that he rehearsed what had transpired from the very beginning by expounding unto them the vision, the command, the three-fold nature of the trance, the Gentile men who approached him and their testimony, his giving of the Gospel, the filling of the Holy Ghost upon them, and the Word of God in Scripture as evidence for the Lord's will. The response? The Bible records, "*When they heard these things, they held their peace,*