

IX 9Marks

How Can I Support International Missions?



**Mark
Collins**

Church Questions

Endorsements for the Church Questions Series

“Christians are pressed by very real questions. How does Scripture structure a church, order worship, organize ministry, and define biblical leadership? Those are just examples of the questions that are answered clearly, carefully, and winsomely in this new series from 9Marks. I am so thankful for this ministry and for its incredibly healthy and hopeful influence in so many faithful churches. I eagerly commend this series.”

R. Albert Mohler Jr., President, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Sincere questions deserve thoughtful answers. If you’re not sure where to start in answering these questions, let this series serve as a diving board into the pool. These minibooks are winsomely to-the-point and great to read together with one friend or one hundred friends.”

Gloria Furman, author, *Missional Motherhood* and *The Pastor’s Wife*

“As a pastor, I get asked lots of questions. I’m approached by unbelievers seeking to understand the gospel, new believers unsure about next steps, and maturing believers wanting help answering questions from their Christian family, friends, neighbors, or coworkers. It’s in these moments that I wish I had a book to give them that was brief, answered their questions, and pointed them in the right direction for further study. Church Questions is a series that provides just that. Each booklet tackles one question in a biblical, brief, and practical manner. The series may be called Church Questions, but it could be called ‘Church Answers.’ I intend to pick these up by the dozens and give them away regularly. You should too.”

Juan R. Sanchez, Senior Pastor, High Pointe Baptist Church, Austin, Texas

“Where can we Christians find reliable answers to our common questions about life together at church—without having to plow through long, expensive books? The Church Questions booklets meet our need with answers that are biblical, thoughtful, and practical. For pastors, this series will prove a trustworthy resource for guiding church members toward deeper wisdom and stronger unity.”

Ray Ortlund, President, Renewal Ministries

How Can I Support
International
Missions?

Church Questions

Am I Called to Ministry?, Brad Wheeler

Does God Love Everyone?, Matt McCullough

How Can I Find Someone to Disciple Me?, Garret Kell

How Can I Get More Out of My Bible Reading?, Jeremy
Kimble

How Can I Love Church Members with Different Politics?,
Jonathan Leeman and Andy Naselli

How Can I Serve My Church?, Matthew Emadi

How Can I Support International Missions?, Mark Collins

How Can Our Church Find a Faithful Pastor?, Mark Dever

How Can Women Thrive in the Local Church?, Keri Folmar

Is It Loving to Practice Church Discipline?, Jonathan Leeman

What If I Don't Desire to Pray?, John Onwuchekwa

What If I Don't Feel Like Going to Church?, Gunner
Gundersen

What If I'm Discouraged in My Evangelism?, Isaac Adams

What Should I Do Now That I'm a Christian?, Sam Emadi

What Should We Do about Members Who Won't Attend?,
Alex Duke

Why Is the Lord's Supper So Important?, Aubrey Sequeira

Why Should I Be Baptized?, Bobby Jamieson

Why Should I Give to My Church?, Jamie Dunlop

Why Should I Join a Church?, Mark Dever

How Can I Support International Missions?

Mark Collins

 **CROSSWAY**[®]
WHEATON, ILLINOIS

How Can I Support International Missions?

Copyright © 2021 by 9Marks

Published by Crossway

1300 Crescent Street
Wheaton, Illinois 60187

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher, except as provided for by USA copyright law. Crossway® is a registered trademark in the United States of America.

Cover design: Jordan Singer

First printing 2021

Printed in the United States of America

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations marked NIV are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com. The “NIV” and “New International Version” are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

All emphases in Scripture quotations have been added by the author.

Trade paperback ISBN: 978-1-4335-7231-9

ePub ISBN: 978-1-4335-7234-0

PDF ISBN: 978-1-4335-7232-6

Mobipocket ISBN: 978-1-4335-7233-3

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Collins, Mark, 1973- author.

Title: How can I support international missions? / Mark Collins.

Description: Wheaton, Illinois : Crossway, [2021] | Series: Church questions | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021000904 (print) | LCCN 2021000905 (ebook) | ISBN 9781433572319 (trade paperback) | ISBN 9781433572326 (pdf) | ISBN 9781433572333 (mobi) | ISBN 9781433572340 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Missions.

Classification: LCC BV2063 .C5835 2021 (print) | LCC BV2063 (ebook) | DDC 266/.023—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021000904>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021000905>

Crossway is a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.

BP 30 29 28 27 26 25 24 23 22 21
15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us,

Selah

that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.

Psalm 67:1-2



Bob and Maxine joined their church in the 1950s as young Christians. They made the church their life. They regularly attended Sunday morning services as well as prayer meetings, and they were consistently involved with the church community throughout the week. Somewhere along the way, they took it upon themselves to get to know the missionaries their church supported. Years later, when my wife and I began to receive support from their church, they wanted to be sure to get our prayer letter. Every furlough we were home, they invited us to dinner. As we talked, they would ask the kind of questions that

indicated they had read our letters and had been praying for us. When we had financial needs, they rallied their small group to take up a collection for us. In every way they could, Bob and Maxine showed us that they were behind our work and were with us. Bob went home to be with the Lord a few years ago, but Maxine is still there, still praying for us—we are sure of that.¹

My goal in this book is to convince you that every Christian should support international missions and also to show you how to do that from wherever God has placed you. I want you to make a habit of supporting missions for the rest of your life. Not every Christian needs to “go” to be faithful, but we’re all called to engage in the church’s mission to reach the nations together. We all have a role to play.

I didn’t always realize this.

As a young Christian, I read missionary biographies like *Shadow of the Almighty*. Jim Elliot and four other missionaries lost their lives on January 8, 1956, at the hands of men from an unreached, remote tribe in Ecuador. Jim Elliot’s quote, “He is no fool who gives what he cannot

keep to gain what he cannot lose,” took on all the more power in my mind because of the way he had lived and died at the age of twenty-eight.²

The legacy of missionaries and martyrs like Jim Elliot is a blessing to all Christians. But I sometimes wonder if Christians wrongly infer from these stories that the gospel only spreads across the world in these dramatic ways. Perhaps you have thought to yourself, *My life has nothing dramatic in it. I'm more or less "stuck" in the same place, at the same church, doing many of the same things I was years ago. In fact, I've been doing the same things for the last decade! I must be in a different category of Christian from those who have a great impact for the kingdom.*

Have you ever thought something like that? Well here's some good news: you shouldn't. We shouldn't ever compare our lives with others. God has given each of us our own roles and responsibilities in the church. We shouldn't measure our faithfulness to Christ by how *dramatic* our life and ministry looks.

I don't know what the Lord has in store for your life. God might be moving some of you

reading this book to leave the comforts of home to spend your life some place far away laboring for the gospel. My hunch, however, is that God is calling most of you reading this book to something else—something just as worthwhile and significant. Maybe, like Bob and Maxine, God's calling you to recognize the responsibility every Christian has to support missions. I'm writing this book mainly for those people. Christians who aren't going to be vocational missionaries still have a role to play in spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

Before we talk about how each Christian can support the work of international missions, I'll take the next few pages to make sure we understand a biblical perspective on missions and exactly what the Lord wants his people to do.

Commissioned by Christ to Reach the World

Many passages in Scripture speak to the missionary task, but at the foundation we need to remember that we do missions because Jesus commissioned his people to carry the gospel to

the ends of the earth. Two passages in Scripture make this point unmistakably: John 20:21 and Matthew 28:18–20.

*“As the Father Has Sent Me,
Even So I Am Sending You” (John 20:21)*

The disciples were surely in shock—the man they had seen crucified was standing *alive* before their eyes. John 20 tells us that while barricaded in a hidden room, wondering if a knock at the door might lead to their arrests and executions, Jesus appeared to the disciples showing them the wounds in his hands and his side (John 20:19–29).

Can you imagine how their thoughts would have been racing? *What could it all mean?* Surely nothing would ever be the same.

Consider what Jesus might have said to them in this moment. He could have declared his sovereign power over heaven and earth. He could have explained how the Old Testament had been fulfilled in him. He could have given them more instruction about the kingdom of

God. Instead he chose to tell them two things: (1) “Peace be with you,” and (2) “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21).

Jesus pronounces peace on the apostles because through his death and resurrection, we have peace with God. Those who believe the gospel know the peace that passes all understanding—the peace of a reconciled relationship with God (Phil. 4:7). No better news exists for the apostles or for us.

But notice, Jesus doesn’t stop with this word of peace. Instead, the gospel of peace has immediate implications for the apostles: “As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you” (John 20:21). What you do comes from who you are. Jesus hits both identity and mission in one sentence. Those two things are one for a disciple of Jesus. As the Father sent Jesus on a ministry of mercy to the world, so Jesus sends his disciples as ministers of mercy.

If you call yourself a Christian, then this is part of your identity too. Disciples are like their masters. When we say that we are disciples of