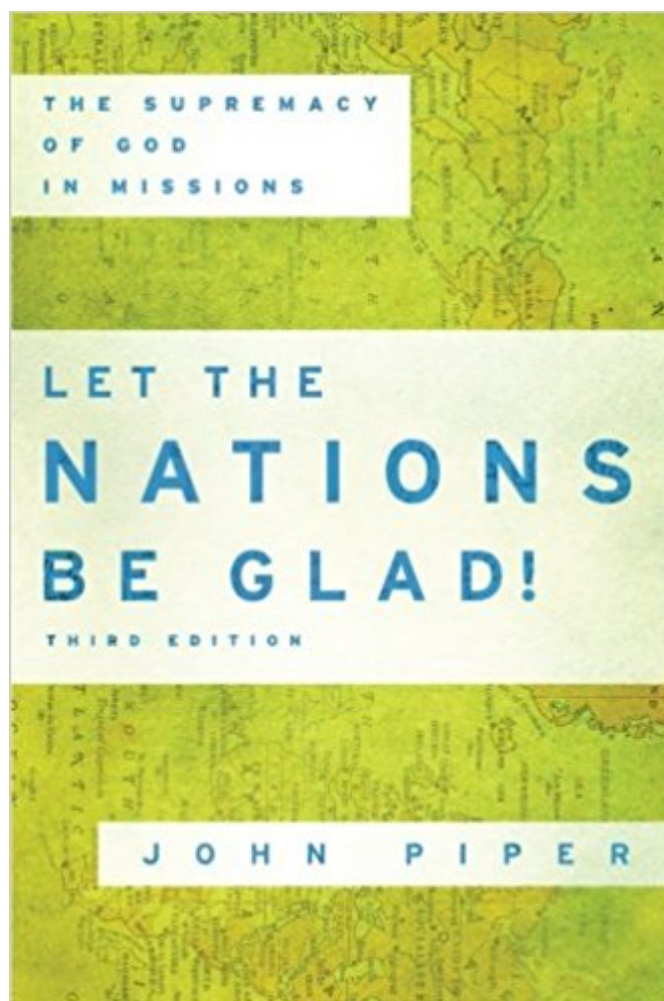


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# Let The Nations Be Glad!: The Supremacy Of God In Missions



## Synopsis

This third edition of Piper's bestselling book shows that worship is the ultimate goal of the church and provides readers with a sound theological foundation for missions.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate."--John Piper  
Let the Nations Be Glad! has become a modern missions classic. A trusted resource for thousands of missionaries, pastors, church leaders, and laypeople, it provides a biblical basis for missions and worship. This third edition has been expanded to include timely new material on the prosperity gospel.  
Praise for the Previous Edition  
"If I had to choose only one book on missions, Let the Nations Be Glad! would be it--precisely because it's about so much more than missions. The book's relentless God-centered focus, with its stress on worship as the 'fuel and goal of missions,' provides the crucial biblical counterpoint to the anthropocentric drumbeat of our day."--Duane Litfin, former president of Wheaton College  
"An invaluable resource that keeps worship at the center of the church's purpose and shows both theologically and practically what that means for mission in the modern world. Missionaries, pastors, teachers, and laypeople with a thirst for God's passion for the peoples of the world will be challenged and encouraged. I offer it my highest recommendation."--A. Scott Moreau, editor, Evangelical Missions Quarterly  
"Let the Nations Be Glad! is the most important book on missions for this generation, and I hope it will be the most influential as well. John Piper places missions where it belongs: at the heart of God's desire to be

glorified among the nations."--R. Albert Mohler Jr., president, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary  
The best biblical study there is on the nature of missions. The best, however, has become better! After building a solid biblical base, Piper confronts some burning issues in missions today in a way that is both spiritually nourishing and inspiringly readable."--Ajith Fernando, national director, Youth for Christ/Sri Lanka

John Piper is founder and teacher of [desiringGod.org](http://desiringGod.org) and chancellor for Bethlehem College and Seminary, Minneapolis. For thirty-three years, he was pastor of Bethlehem Baptist Church. He is author of more than fifty books, including *Desiring God* and *Let t*

Summary of Contents of Book  
Piper makes the now famous claim that "missions exist because worship doesn't" (p. 35). This claim underlies the entire message of the book and comes out more positively found in the subtitle, "The Supremacy of God in Missions." For far too long the primary motivation, guiding principles and practices have been driven by a less than Biblical priority to the Supremacy of God and the promotion of his glory to the ends of the Earth. That God has had a heart for the nations from the beginning and it's not because they are so lovely but exclusively because God in Christ would get glory as his name is hallowed, heralded and honored by a multitude of diverse people groups. There will not be a tribe/family left out from representation that will not bow in adoration of King Jesus. With that as the ends for God the question becomes what is the end for man? And if that end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever then the fact that that is not happening means the must be precisely the mission of the church provide the only means that will bring about the repentance of lost individuals to be forgiven, reconciled and live a new life with God. That means to that end, the Bible says, is the gospel of Jesus Christ and is appropriated by conscious faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. *Let the Nations be Glad* has 3 sections that draw largely upon Biblical Revelation but are sprinkled with examples of systematic, historical and pastoral theology throughout which makes for an engaging read. I should make mention of an additional chapter in the latest edition, thought necessary due to the growing popularity of "the prosperity gospel", which is really no gospel at all. Sadly this theology has flourished in some of the more poverty stricken areas of the south largely due to the desire for the alleviation of suffering. Christianity does not promise material or physical prosperity. This teaching is antithetical to Chapter 2 on the Supremacy of God in Missions through suffering. Piper gives 12 appeals to prosperity preachers and not to belittle or

Chapter one is on the Supremacy of God in missions through Worship is ringing the same bell found in all of Piper's books summarized in the statement "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him." Piper helpfully lists full verses out that can be read through quickly which drives it home. There is no doubt that God has created, provides, redeems, judges, and consummates all for the praise of his Name. Piper helpfully introduces us to Jonathan Edwards and *The End for which God Created the World*, highlighting the book he wrote to summarize Edwards' main points and get help navigate the rich prose called "God's Passion for His Own Glory." In addition to that book he wrote "The Pleasures of God" and a Chapter in *Desiring God* is devoted to the same subject. Chapter 2 was extremely important for an understanding of and motivation for prayer. He used the image of wartime walkie-talkies in a battle. When we pray we are asking God for help for the mission similar to soldiers might appeal to headquarters with all their recon and data. The reason we don't pray is because we don't think we are at war. Piper makes a strong case for the wartime imagery in Paul in terms of at war with our flesh, the devil, and the world. The second section of the book is about the necessity and nature of the task of missions. Here Piper makes it clear that man is under condemnation because of his rebellion and the only means for escaping is the gospel. The Son of God became a man and satisfied the wrath of God in our place so we could be forgiven and accepted. What is so important for mission is that this saving work of Christ is never granted to sinners apart from conscious faith in the gospel and repentance. This brings about the necessity for messengers of the gospel to bring the gospel to unreached people groups. Scripture dictates the nature of missions. We must preach the gospel which is the power of God unto salvation for who believe (Rom. 1:16). This means we don't depend on underhanded or cunning ways but preach the whole counsel of God tied to the story line of God's plan to redeem a people from every nation/family through life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The 3rd section of the book deals with the practical outworking of compassion and worship. Here we have Piper seeking to show that there is no need to create a bifurcation in our motives to see God glorified in saving people and having compassion on our lost neighbors. If our motivation of evangelism is merely to glorify God then not only do we have zero compassion for our fellow man and we become cold and heartless but also our good works are seen as a bait and switch. Piper argues that on the contrary, true compassion for man sees that man's greatest need is the

forgiveness of sins. As well as this, his chief end is to glorify God. Having the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation the new creation will be completely satisfied in God resulting in another worshiper of God. It is no way unloving or uncompassionate to see our highest calling and most loving thing we can do to share the message of God's saving grace.

### Evaluation of the Book

The book succeeds and will serve as a classic text on inspiring generations of Christians to missions because of its Biblical and Theological precision. Piper proves that his "reformed thinking" in no ways hinders his passion for mission but instead inspires it and gives it hope in the first place. The Supreme God of the universe has done everything for his glory and would become an idolater himself if another motive were sought. This might sound selfish but when God is so good that he delights to share himself with others who in turn promote his praise to the ends of the earth he is greatly pleased and so are we. Far be it from missions being some stepsister to the story of the Bible or purpose of God. It is rooted in the purposes of God from before the foundation of the World. God commissioned his Son to save a people, sent the Spirit to apply his work and now sends his people to the ends of the earth with a message of hope.

### Personal Reflection on the Implications of the Book for Ministry

The most impactful portions of the book were on worship, prayer, inclusivism/exclusivism and the word study on ethne. I greatly appreciate how Piper is not afraid to do some intense exegesis in a popular book. A permanent application for motivating our church to pray will be to see our desperation, the enemy we are fighting and the mission we have before us. We are wholly inadequate in and of ourselves to fulfill the great commission and yet not only does Christ promise to be with us to the end of the age he tells us to ask anything in his name and it will be granted to us. The way I understand nations in Matthew 28:19 has been tweaked. I now see that this has to do with people groups rather than geopolitical entities. This helped me see the great commission as flowing from God's promise to Abraham that through him all the families of the earth would be blessed, that blessing being namely salvation. As far as greater impact, the fact that Piper was a pastor of a large church, not an overseas missionary and yet has such a passion for missions gives me a model of how to model to and mobilize a local church for missions. I can imagine that Bethlehem Baptist was praying towards, informed of, giving towards and sending missionaries all over the place. And they were taking the same message that Piper preached week in week out. God in Christ is glorifying himself through the salvation of the nations so that Christ will be a universal savior and have a diversified choir in heaven of blood bought rebels turned worshipers.

Excellent, foundational and necessary book on the topic of church missions. In true Piper fashion,

the book is extremely God-centered with a focus on God's glory for the joy of all nations in Jesus Christ. Although the book is true to Piper's life and ministry purpose, the large majority of the content is unique to this book and not simply a rehashing of what is covered in *Desiring God*. There are many books that discuss the "what" and "how" of Christian missions, but *Let The Nations Be Glad* does a great job in explaining the "why" behind missions. Guided my study in preparing a short sermon on the topic. Definitely worth the read!

I praise God for this book. It is the BEST non-biblical book written on the subject of missions... ever. Every missionary should be required to read *Let the Nations Be Glad*, and understand biblical missions, so well expounded in Piper's book. "Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Selah! Let the peoples praise you, O God; Let ALL the peoples praise you! The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us. God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear Him!" - Psalm 67:4

It's refreshing to read a book on missions which does not try to convince people to go because God is losing the war and he needs more soldiers, but which shows the sure victory of the kingdom and tells its readers to hop on board. Victory is sure. The kingdom will win. Jesus will crush all of his enemies under his feet. Go and make disciples of all the nations!

While personally I am not a big fan of John Piper, this book is one of a kind. It opens with one of the most beautiful illustrations as to why missions even exists, a paragraph worth memorizing. The subject matter is that which is of utmost importance, what we have been commanded to do, in one way or another. Usually a book on world missions consists of a biography, fund development, or a how to, but this book walks through the biblical basis both for missions and for a church focused on more than itself. This is the apex of global mission books!

John Piper is a wonderful theologian. I enjoyed the book, learned a lot and after some thinking and review will be able to apply the principals in the book. However, I do have this... Once again JP is a wonderful communicator of biblical principals but at times the writing was not only in the weeds it was in the dirt, i.e. Very particular and very thorough. Recommend yes but have a lot of patience to absorb and understand what JP is writing.

This book had been equipping and I enjoyed it so much! It had grown my faith and helped me

decipher my calling for the Lord! I have been reading and listening to John Piper and his leadership has lead me closer to God! Thank you so much!

This is an incredible and thorough examination of God's great commission to those He has redeemed. With an examination of prayer, suffering, people groups, and the glory and motivation of God, Piper uses Scripture to implore the reader to seek satisfaction in Christ and share this satisfaction with every people group of the earth for the glory of God.

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