From the Past and Into the Future

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We have just come through a season of great celebration—BMM’s 100th birthday. What a great God we serve! This year it has been very good to reflect on what God has done in the past, but the realities of our day compel me to keep serving wholeheartedly and seeking others who want to do the same. Allow me to explain.

1920 looks strangely familiar

At our 100th birthday celebration Dr. Patrick Odle, BMM’s president, noted the similarities of 1920 (the year of our beginnings) and 2020. By 1920, the Spanish Flu had taken over 20 million lives. World War I brought destruction to Europe, took many lives, and led many churchgoers to question their Christian beliefs. Protestant denominations in the US experienced great theological decline giving way to Modernism and theological liberalism. It was in this
gloomy context that a group of godly individuals created Baptist Mid-Missions, which resulted in BMM’s first missionaries going to the middle of Africa. God then expanded BMM’s reach into more than 50 countries.

Dr. Odle stated, “Despite facing insurmountable challenges, look at what God has done through BMM since its humble beginnings. Countless souls have been won to Christ, and tens of thousands of churches have been started.” Praise God!

Our 2020 world faces the same challenges
The year 2020, by comparison, has seen similar challenges. Like the Spanish Flu, COVID-19 has taken many lives and infected many more. The impact of the pandemic is testing the faith of professing Christians and confronting churches with uncertainty and decline. The theological liberalism of 1920 has morphed into postmodernism and many other “isms” that attack biblical Christianity. These and other attacks on Christianity in America, coupled with the spiritual numbness of our culture, have resulted in 80 percent of American churches plateauing or declining. No wonder the rate of retiring missionaries exceeds that of new missionaries. Add to these difficulties the hostilities of the political climate, racial tensions, and international conflicts that continue to accelerate.

Now, consider this startling reality. In 1920 the world population was 1.8 billion. Today, the world population is quickly on course to reach 8 billion souls.
Is it too hard for God?

Dr. Odle asked us these questions, and I put them to you today: “Are our challenges any more difficult for God than those our original missionaries faced a century ago? No! If God could do such amazing things in the last century, could He do similar things in the next century?” The answer to that last question, we know, is Yes. If that is so, why don’t we step up like our forefathers did, in the strength and courage that God provides, to seek to make an impact in such a lost world? God can do it! He will build His church. Won’t you join us in working for the Gospel’s advance in this next 100 years?
Register now for Advance Weekend, a seminar that will equip you with tools for missions involvement. The theme will be Keeping it Simple: Discipleship as the DNA of Missions with sessions by Daniel and Heather Boyd who work in a church plant in Holland. If you or anyone you know is interested in missions, don't miss this informative weekend. Click the picture above for more details or to register.