



## Every Tongue Confess

The Church of the Nazarene's annual Easter Offering for the World Evangelism Fund has been a denominational tradition for more than 75 years. Many resources are now available for you to use to promote the offering. We received an indescribable gift when God sent His only Son to die for our sins. This Easter, we reflect on that precious gift of salvation and the joyful opportunity we have been given to share it with

everyone, everywhere, in the hopes that every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord!

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## Costly Connections

Written by Daron Brown - From his column Pressing On

The church I pastor sent 22 people to Tocumen, Panama, last fall. We partnered with the Church of the Nazarene in Tocumen to construct a kitchen for their school that serves neighborhood children. We poured sidewalks and a ramp. We moved dirt, made countertops, painted, and installed plumbing and electrical. While our local church has always supported missions, this was our first overseas mission trip. Having been on them before, I was eager to bring some of our good people along for such an adventure.



Several weeks before we departed, as we were finalizing the plans, a dear friend approached me with a sincere question: "Pastor, this is a costly trip. Wouldn't it be better for us to send the money to the field instead of going?"

"We could do that," I thought about saying. "But we would have to put up a

sign out front that reads Western Union and would have to take down the sign that reads church." I thought it. I didn't say it.

This isn't the first time I've heard such questions. I have welcomed the opportunity to begin an honest conversation about the value and importance of mission trips.

First of all, our God is a sending God. The command to "GO" is threaded throughout our scriptures. From Abraham to Moses and the people of Israel, to the prophets, this God makes a habit of sending people. And when it came time for God to "reconcile to himself all things" (Col. 1:20), He did not remain in

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heaven and “write a check.” He sent His Son. Then He sent the Spirit. Then He sent the Church. The people of God are clearly a commissioned people.

And our going is not limited to a single context. In Acts 1:8, Jesus tells the soon-to-be Church, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Like the Early Church, we are to live missionally where we are. And we are sent abroad. I recognize that not every individual believer can participate in mission contexts due to lack of resources, health limitations, etc. But every local church can make an effort to live and speak the gospel both locally and abroad.

Second, the Church is, by nature, connective. God’s Church transcends time, space, culture, and denominational lines. We are connected to other believers by the blood of Jesus and the bond of the Spirit. And within our own tribe, we share the privilege of being connected to local Nazarene churches in nearly 160 world areas. While some people tout the value of non-denominational churches or weaknesses of denominations, this is one of our great strengths: Nazarenes have built-in connections. As such, we claim immediate family members around the globe. Mission trips build, nurture, and strengthen those connections. We not only cultivate associations with those “on the field,” with whom we partner, we also bolster links within the team as we go together.

Third, “going” generates more monetary giving, not less. We need not assume the alternative is between going and giving. Both are matters of obedience for a local church. While airfare, lodging, and project expenses are costly, they represent an investment in a local church’s future financial support of missions. I can confidently say I know 22 people who are now giving more money to missions (both local and abroad) than they were before they made the trip.

There are many more benefits and blessings that come from mission trips. Some are impossible to express in words. They are realized in smiles and hugs and sweat and tears when language is lacking.

Yes, my friend, mission trips are costly. The most important things always are.

Daron Brown lives and pastors in Waverly, Tennessee. He is the author of [Shift: How Nine Churches Experienced Vibrant Renewal](#).

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## Quotes:

### Billy Graham



*“God proved his love on the Cross. When Christ hung, and bled, and died, it was God saying to the world, ‘I love you.’”*