

Review

book: *Let the Nations be Glad*

Let the Nations Be Glad

John Piper

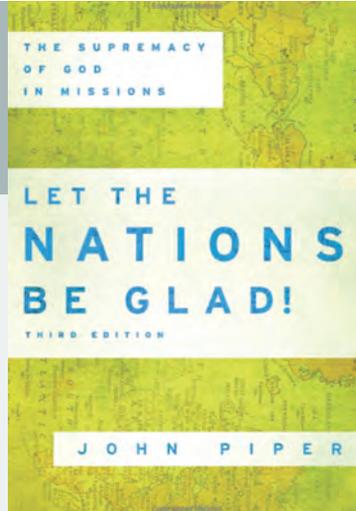
ISBN: 9780801036415, Baker Academic, 2010
(3rd Edn), £9.99 paperback, £6.64 Kindle

'Missions is not a recruitment project for God's labour force. It is a liberation project from the heavy burdens and hard yokes of other gods.' If you want to be refreshed anew by the beauty of the gospel and be encouraged to play your role in spreading what is genuinely the best news for the sake of God's kingdom, this book is for you.

This engaging and powerfully-argued book about the what, how and most importantly, the why of mission has deeply changed, challenged and encouraged me. It is by no means a light read, but the pearls within the deep theological discussion make it a worthy read for those who persevere.

The first section is about the missional implications of worship, prayer and suffering which Piper describes as the purpose, the power and the price of mission. Missional context aside, I found these chapters to be incredibly edifying in their biblical teaching. The second and third parts focus on the practical outworkings of mission and detailed interpretation of particular biblical phrases such as 'all the nations'.

Piper is absolutely convicted of the verity and infinite goodness of the gospel for the whole world, and has an infectious zeal to glorify God. It is apparent that this fervour is deeply rooted in Scripture. Piper combines his high esteem for the Bible with a rigorous scholarly approach, piling verse upon verse and expounding the context, often venturing into Greek and Hebrew analysis. It is clear that he wants the Word to lead his



arguments rather than the other way around. He does not beat around the bush or skirt the difficult issues but confronts them with honesty and humility.

Though this was the first of Piper's books I had read, I had heard his quote 'God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him'. So it was not surprising that themes of worship and the glory of God saturate this book from cover to cover. 'Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church.

Worship is.' These are the arresting words that open the book and they are followed by reasoning that not only convinces you that it is true, but that it is also wonderful. Worship is the fuel of missions because 'you can't commend what you don't cherish', something which is blindingly obvious but also an essential starting point.

What is the primary reason for mission? Before reading this book, I might have said obedience to the Great Commission or compassion for those who do not know God. Although these reasons are of course important, I am now much more convinced that it is a genuine love for God and desire for his name to be exalted.

As well as being the fuel of mission, Piper also says that worship and adoration is the goal of mission, 'the gladness of the peoples in the greatness of God'. Some beautiful passages towards the end of the book outline the future (which has already begun) of diverse people from every nation and tongue united in praise for the Lord. ■

Daniel Porter is a medical student at University College, London