

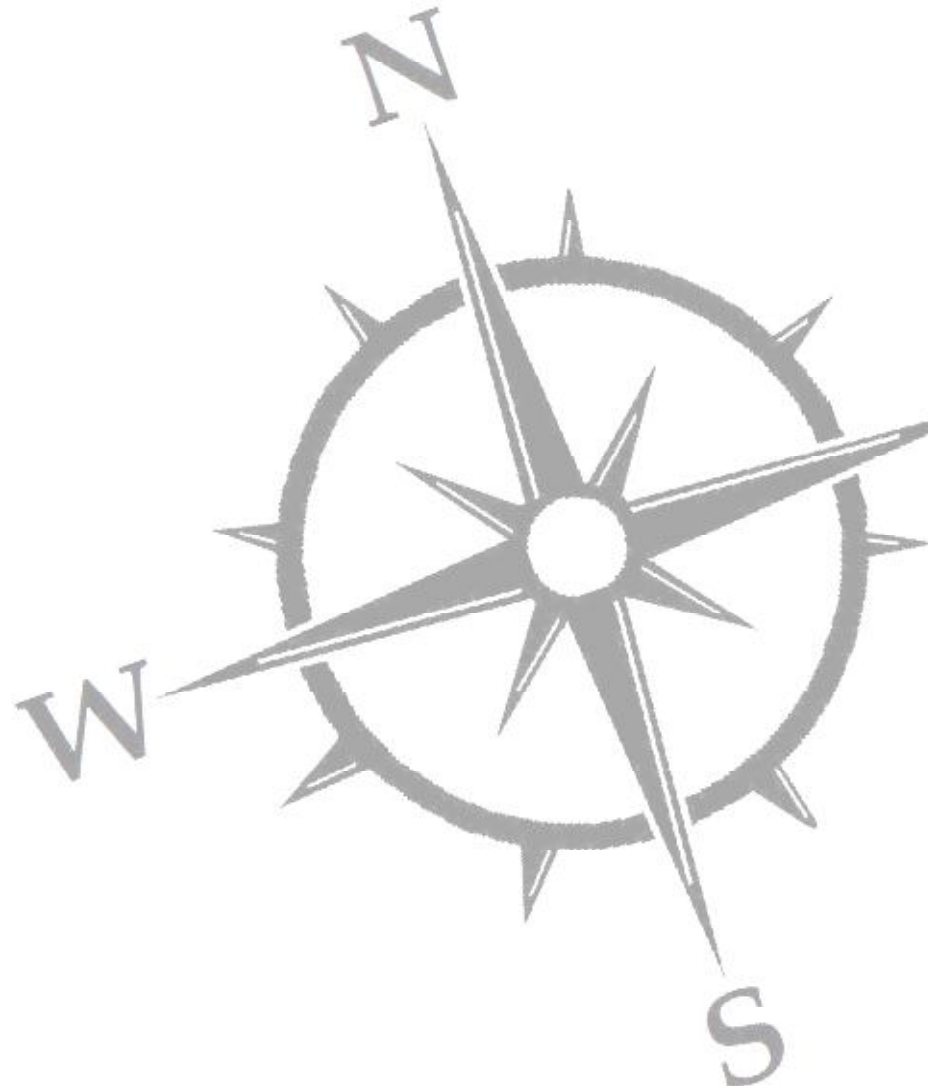
The Life of William Carey

(1761-1834)

Lesson: 4.4 – Available Missionary Spotlight Series

This story encourages us to be available for God's use. God wants us to be available for Him to use regardless of our abilities and courage or the lack thereof. God had some big things that He wanted to do in William Carey's life, but William had to make himself available for God to use him.

"Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." - Romans 6:13







Who remembers where we left off last week?

(Read the last paragraph from last week's lesson to begin this lesson as a review).

It wasn't long before the entire story about the coin came tumbling out. The blacksmith had been surprised that I had not noticed the fake coin that he had given me sooner. I apologized and begged Mr. Nichols not to send me to prison. I promised to give him all the rest of the money I had been given for my Christmas box to try and repay him. Mr. Nichols forgave me and that Christmas passed quickly.

I kept busy as an apprentice. I soon found out that Mr. Nichols loved books as much as I did. I quite often would borrow one from him and read it as I worked. Mr. Nichols never minded as long as I got my work done. One of the books that I came across had funny scribbles in it. I guessed it was written in a different language just like that Latin book I had learned to read. Soon

enough, I learned that it was a language called Greek and that a man named Thomas Jones from my hometown of Paulersbury knew how to read it. I began going to him and spent all of my free time studying the book, and soon I could read and speak Greek pretty well.

Because I was not sent to prison, I began to go to church three times on Sunday as I had promised to God. I enjoyed talking and arguing about church and religion with John Warr as we worked together on shoes. John also went to church. John was a Dissenter. A Dissenter did not go to the King of England's church like I did. John and I had a lot of debates about whose church was right. Though I won most of our arguments, there was something about John that I wished that I had. One time, John told me something that would cause me to rethink some things about my church. John told me that his church was free to believe what the Bible taught, not what the King had ordered or thought that the church should believe. Something happened across the Atlantic ocean very soon after John said this to me. The people of America were tired of paying high taxes to England and decided that they were going to fight for independence from England. They had signed a Declaration of Independence. The Americans were led by a man named George Washington whose grandparents had come from the town of Paulersbury where I was from. The King of England commanded that all of us pray that God would help the colonists in America to fail. Many of us were upset with our king and thought he might be going a little crazy. A lot

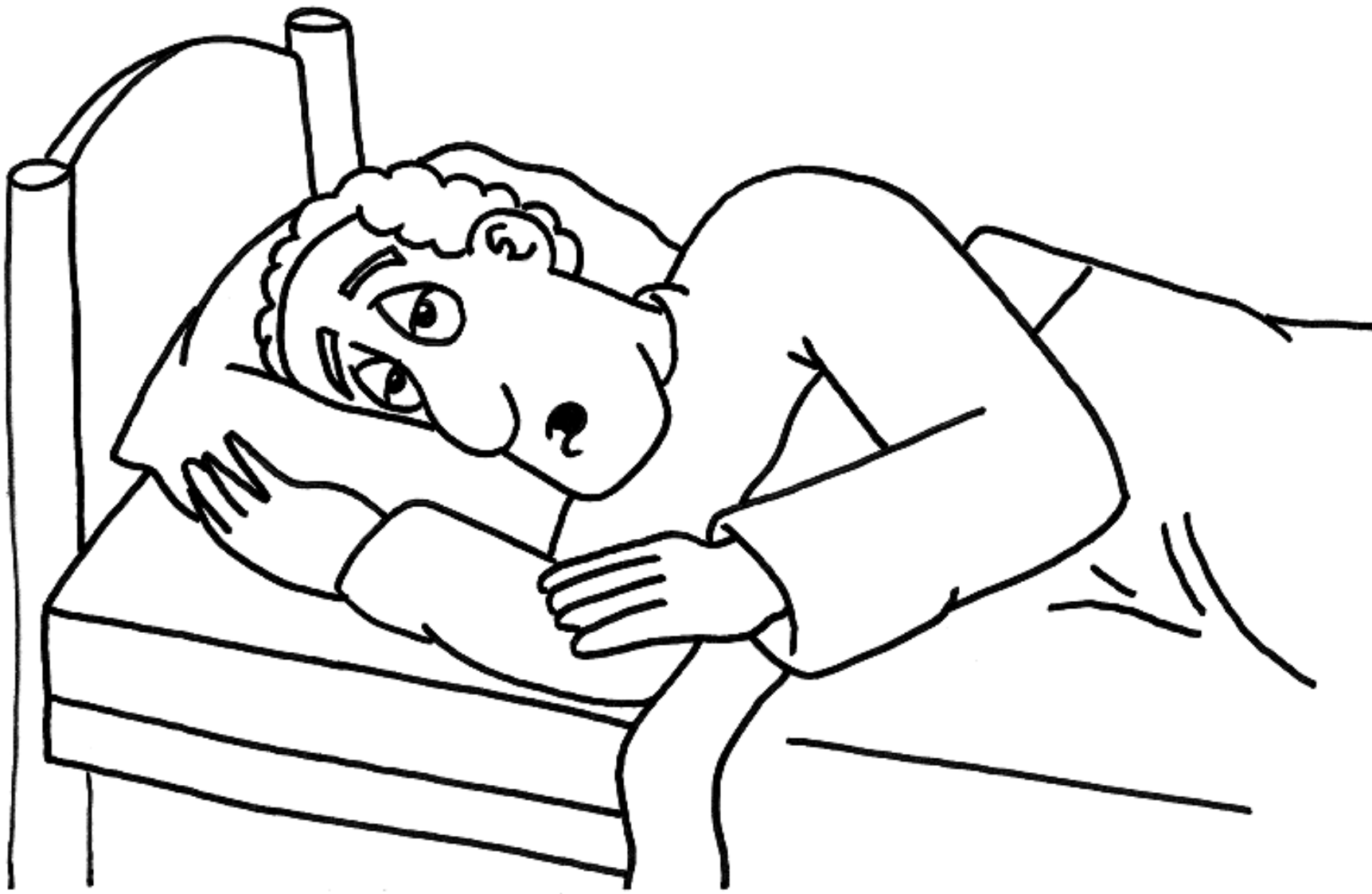
of us agreed that what the colonists were doing was the right thing to do.

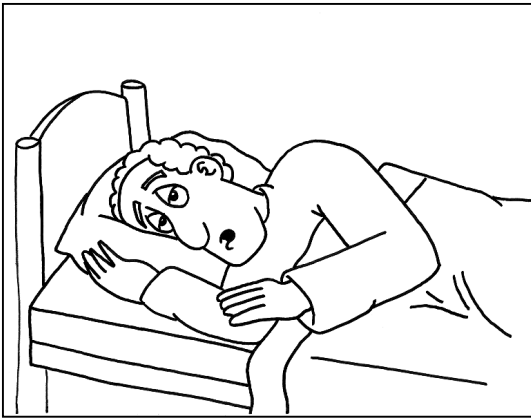
John had been inviting me to his church for a long time. My church was commanded to pray that the American colonists would fail. John said that most of the people in his church were praying that the colonists would win. Finally, I decided that I would visit John's church and see what his church was all about.

At John's church, people prayed and gave short sermons. They truly seemed to believe what they talked about and read. In talking with John and in going to his church, I realized that I couldn't do enough good things for God to forget about my sins. I realized that I needed to accept Jesus as my Savior and asked Him to forgive me for all of my sins.

For the next six months, John and I spent a lot of time talking and reading from the Bible. About six months later, Mr. Nichols suddenly passed away. John had just finished his apprenticeship, and he was able to find a job quickly. What would I do? I still had two more years to go. I began searching and found nothing for about two weeks. Finally, a man named Thomas Old in the town of Hackelton agreed to take me in and finish my apprenticeship.

I moved to Hackelton which was only two miles away and began working for Mr. Old. Mr. Old always said that I did good work. He even kept a pair of shoes that I had made in his shop. He told others that they were a model of how a pair of shoes was supposed to be made. I continued going to church. Mr. Plackett was in charge of the





church in the town of Hackelton. He had three daughters. The oldest daughter was married to my boss, Mr. Old. The middle daughter was named Dolly. I had only lived in Hackelton about two years when Dolly and I got married.

Things went well for Dolly and me at first. I was making shoes and also spent some of my time preaching. I preached in the church in Hackelton, and also in a village about eight miles away called Earls Barton. I would also travel ten miles and preach in my old town of Paulersbury one time per month. My parents could not ever come and hear me preach because my father would lose his job in the church if it was ever known that he had gone to a Dissenter church. Dolly and I soon had a baby that we named Ann. We were very poor. I was still finishing my apprenticeship and hardly got any money from Mr. Old. All of the churches that I preached in were filled with very poor people. They couldn't even afford to pay for me to replace the shoes that I wore out walking to preach to them each week. Because we were so poor, we often only ate

oatmeal and water for many days in a row.

When Ann turned one and a half years old she got very sick. We did our best to help her feel better, but sadly God took her to Heaven. About the same time I got very sick with the same cold that Ann had been sick with. Would I die from it? My mother traveled out to help us. It was the first time she had ever come over to my house. It took a long time, but I eventually got better. From then on I caught colds very easily. When I finally got out of bed, I found out that my illness had also made all the hair, on the top of my head, fall out. I was bald and I was only 23 years old. I was very embarrassed by my bald head, but a man in town was kind enough to make a wig for me to wear.

I soon realized that I needed to be baptized. I had been baptized as a baby, but I saw that the Bible taught that a person should be baptized after they trusted the Lord as their Savior. It was a cold morning in October when I was baptized in the River Nene. Pastor Ryland wrote in his diary that he had baptized "a poor journeyman shoemaker." Little did either of us know the big plans that God had in store for me. I just wanted to be available for God to use me however He wanted to.

A few months after I was baptized, my boss, Thomas Old, passed away. I was now left to try to take over his business and support his wife and family along with my wife. I didn't have to take care of Mrs. Old, but I felt like it was the right thing to do. I worked at making shoes and still tried to preach at several Dissenter churches in the area. That winter was the coldest one in

history, but somehow we all made it through.

About a year later, Thomas Old's wife married again, and I was able to move to a new town called Moulton. The church there in Moulton had asked me to come and be their pastor. I was making the same amount of money as I had made while making shoes, but now I could focus on studying the Bible and preaching. I found out very soon after getting there that the old school teacher had left. I decided to teach at the school to make some extra money.

In school, I tried to get the children interested in places around the world. I glued a bunch of pieces of paper together and made a big map of the world that I put on the wall. After I drew the map, I wrote everything I knew about each country on the map. I got a lot of those facts from a book that had been written by Captain Cook, who was one of my childhood heroes. Sometimes, when I was teaching the class, I would think about all the people in those places who had never heard about Jesus, and it would make me very sad. Nearly all of my class had never even left the town of Moulton and had no idea how big the world really was. I tried my best to get them to see it as I saw it.

Very soon, the old school teacher came back and took over the school, and I again went back to making shoes. I worked for a man named Mr. Gotch who made shoes for the English army and navy. My church encouraged me to become ordained, which meant that I would be an official pastor of the church. Three pastors were at my ordination: John Sutcliff, John Ryland (who had baptized me), and Andrew Fuller. I did not





know it at the time, but I would stay connected to these men for the rest of my life.

As an official pastor, I could now go to pastor's meetings and learn from some of the older pastors in nearby towns. At one meeting, Reverend Ryland Sr. asked all of us if anyone had anything they wanted to talk about. I had been thinking for a long time about something and decided to bring it up. I stood up and told the other pastors that when Jesus had told His disciples to go to the ends of the Earth and share the gospel that He meant not just for the disciples to do that, but for everyone else who followed Jesus after that to do it. Reverend Ryland Sr. told me to sit down and said that when God wanted to save the heathen (meaning the unsaved people in other places), He would do it without any of our help. He tried to embarrass me, but I believed in what I had said even stronger now and continued to study what my Bible said about it.

I started writing down my thoughts about missions. Before long, I had written enough that I actually could put it all together

in a book. It had five chapters. It talked about what the Bible said about taking the gospel to foreign lands, how to learn another language, and how to raise money as a missionary. I had no money to publish it though.

I moved to another town called Leicester. My family had grown over the last few years. I now had three little boys named Felix, William Jr., and Peter (who was named after my uncle). My wife and I also had a baby girl named Lucy who God took home to Heaven. Again we were very sad, just as we had been when God took my first daughter home to Heaven.

At one pastors' meeting, I met a man named Tom Potts. Tom had been to America, and I wanted to hear all about it. As we talked, I began talking with him about missions. Tom told me that I should write a book about what I had said about missions. I told him that I had, but I didn't have money to publish it. Tom told me that he would pay to have my book published. Not long after that, in 1792, I held a copy of my printed book. Books in that day had long titles. Mine had a long title too, but people just called it *The Enquiry*.

At the next pastors' meeting, I again spoke on the need for missions around the world. Most of the other pastors had read my book and were beginning to understand what I was saying. I finished my message with two phrases: "Expect great things from God. Attempt great things for God."

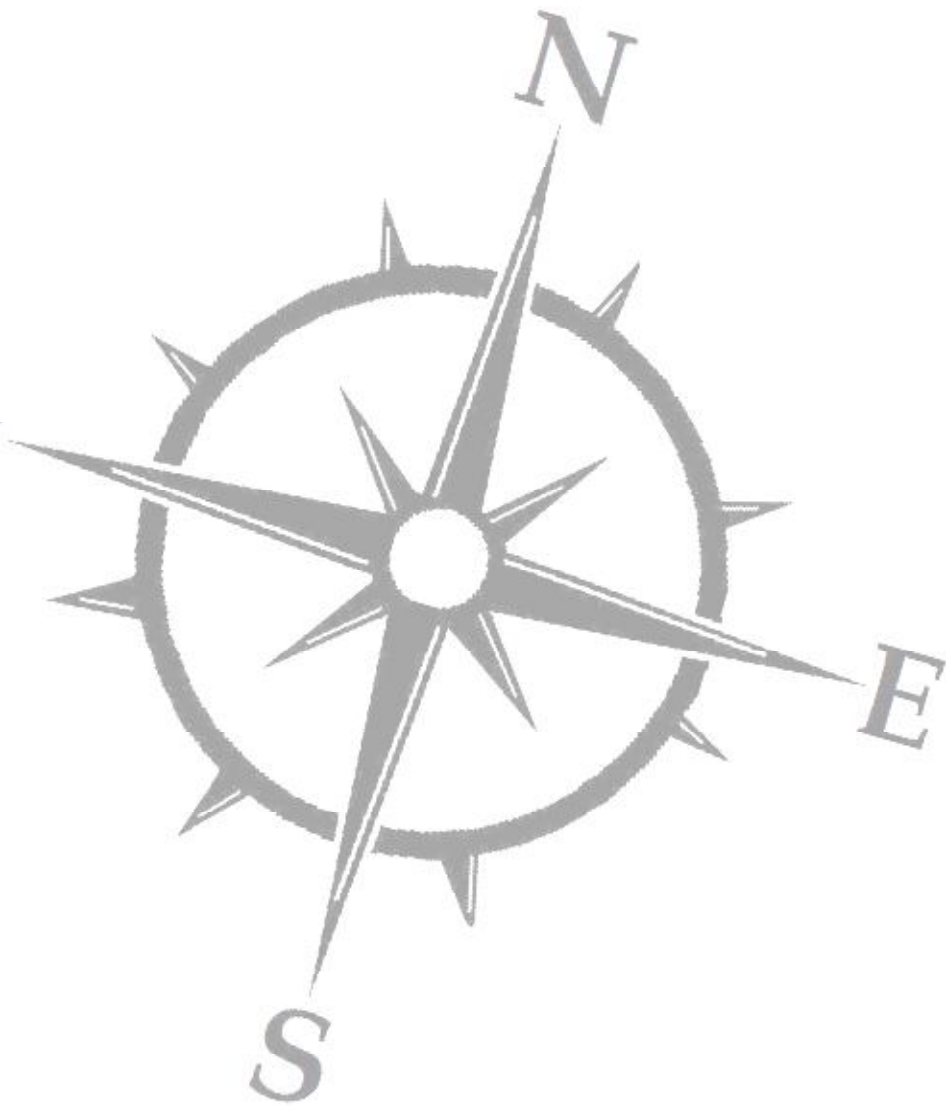
After this message, eleven other pastors and I decided to attempt something great for God. We started the Particular Baptist Society for Propagating the Gospel. Each

person in the group promised to give some money in the hopes of sending out a missionary. No one had ever been a missionary before, so a lot of questions came up in our first meeting. What kinds of qualities should a missionary have? Where should we send them? What should they do when they got there? Should they bring their family with them? Who would even be willing to go? We didn't know the answers, but we knew God would help us.

Not long after this, a letter came in the mail to me from London. I didn't know anyone from London, and I didn't recognize the name on the letter. I nervously opened the envelope...As I read the first line of the letter my mouth fell open.

**Who do you think the letter was from?
What do you think the letter said? To find out come back next time.**

*(For additional information, discussion questions, and materials on this lesson please refer to **lesson 4.4 on page 136** in your *India Expedition - Leader's Guide*).*



References

For further reading or to obtain more information on this portion of the life of this missionary, please consult the following sources from which we obtained our information:

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