

VII. MISSIONS AND MISSIONARY INSTITUTIONS

A. **The Idea**

1. The term "missions" comes from the Latin root "mitto", to send, etc. Hence the idea is that of one sent or dispatched on an errand and the New Testament concept grows especially from the work of the church in Acts 13 and the "go" commands of the Lord. It is an interesting historical study in itself and in this part of our course we summarize missions activity for the first several hundred years of the church. The great work in this field is LaTourette's "History of the Expansion of Christianity".
2. While there is no direct dependence on Jewish ideology, you will see a similarity in the nature of the apostolic company (12), and many of the early mission moves that work in similar numbers. It is possible that some synagogue ideals may be seen in this as well.
3. The early work of missions and missionaries will differ a bit from present expressions due to sociological change, among other things. Some of the mission work is almost accidental. the believers had to go some place to avoid persecution. and some of it is intentional, e.g. the Macedonian vision. There have been many phases in the progress in the way in which missions have and are being conducted and I will probably elaborate on this in class.

B. **The Earliest Missions workings**

1. The Apostolic Period

We have previously discussed this in brief notes on the traditional ideas of where the Apostles may have gone and what their work may have been. We are pretty certain about the following:

- Thomas went to the far east: India, perhaps farther. The Mar Thoma and St. Thomas Evangelical churches in India are witnesses to the historicity of this.
- John stayed in and around Asia Minor and had an effective ministry in the Ephesus area.