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Strategic Writing

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## Position Paper

### Denton Bible Church Position Paper on sending missionaries to isolated places

#### **Introduction**

In 2018, John Allen Chau, an American missionary from Washington State, chose to visit a 30,000-year-old tribe on an isolated island near the Andaman Sea even after the government forbade him to go. The island was inhabited by an isolated tribe of Sentinelese who killed Chau when he came on the island after Chau caught a ride on a ferry boat and kayaked to the island. Denton Bible Church's position on this issue is in support of Chau in that all Christians should "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matthew 28:19, New International Version). Denton Bible believes that there should be no restrictions on the locations missionaries go to in order to serve God.

#### **Sending Missionaries**

According to the Human Organization, more Americans are traveling abroad as participants in short-term mission trips. As Christians, we believe that it is important to go a spread the good news of the Gospel to all that are willing to hear it. It is important to do this as we are called to in the book of Matthew. Denton Bible Church is dedicated to helping Americans do this through our full-service missions sending agency, Serve. We believe that everyone should have access to the Gospel and hear about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We established Serve to glorify God by cultivating, equipping, and mobilizing Christians worldwide. According to the Christianity Today (2016), the United States was the top senders of Christian missionaries in 2010 with 127,000 missionaries, and we are happy to be a part of that number.

We believe it is important to send missionaries all over the world, especially to those who do not have the resources to see it, read it, or hear about it. The Bible states that we should praise the Lord, tell everyone about Him, and make sure that everyone knows about him (Isaiah 12:4, NIV). We believe that it

is important to share the Gospel to everyone, including to those who may not be able to afford biblical resources, such as a Bible, and to those who may not have ever heard about Jesus Christ. We also believe that it is important to share the good news of our Lord to those who live in countries that are strict in religious practices or who outlaw it completely. For example, according to Christianity Today (2016), missionary-sending agencies are illegal in China.

Denton Bible Church also believes that we should send missionaries everywhere to help provide first aid and bring supplies that could otherwise be unobtainable. We should also support others through construction and rebuilding projects. For example, the country of Trinidad and Tobago experienced widespread floods in October 2018. Every year our student ministries sends a group of 100 students to help spread the Gospel through the island of Trinidad. This year they will be taking extra supplies to help the organization they partner with as well as participate in construction projects to help rebuild houses that were destroyed in the floods. According to the International Review of Mission, missions are essential to the church's existence, and Denton Bible Church believes that too which is why we send hundreds of missionaries and short-term mission trips out into the world every year.

### **Opposing Viewpoints**

Many believe that Americans should not send missionaries to those in isolated areas for many reasons. The first being that when missionaries visit isolated places, they put the health of those isolated at risk due to missionaries carrying unknown diseases and health conditions. Many people believe that Chau could have put, or possibly has put, the lives of the Sentinelese at risk when he ventured on to their island. According to the Value of Solitude, the island has not had contact with the outside world since 1991. Denton Bible Church recognizes this issue and aims to research every place we send missionaries to combat this and provide a healthy and safe location for missionaries to go to and to protect those who we may have contact with. However, we recognize that we cannot foresee every possible issue or health condition that may arise.

It is also believed that Americans should not send missionaries to places where we do not know the language of the people. Denton Bible Church's stance on this issue is that when we send missionaries

to other countries, we first verify that the missionary has some way of communicating with the people and for those that do not, we get them trained in that language.

Another issue brought up is that it is difficult to get to isolated places as we have never been there before. Before sending a missionary to a place, we research everything we can about the location they are visiting, including how to get there and laws that may be in place. Every location visited by a Denton Bible missionary has been thoroughly vetted and travel organized first.

Denton Bible Church's position on sending missionaries to isolated places is that Christians should always try to spread the Gospel in any way that they can.

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