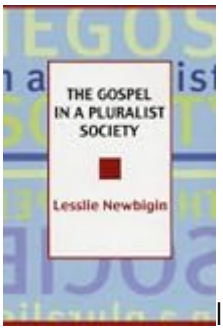
MISSION BEGINS WITH A KIND OF EXPLOSION OF JOY!

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It is always nice when you come across the source of a quote which you have read many times before. I've often heard Leslie Newbigin quoted as saying that *Mission begins with an explosion of joy* and today, reading his book 'The Gospel in a Pluralist Society', I came across the full quote. I'm going to cite it at length here, because I really like what he has to say about the nature of mission.

> *There has been a long tradition which sees the mission of the Church primarily as obedience to a command. It has been cusomary to speak of "the mission mandate." This way of putting the matter is certainly not without justification, and yet it seems to me that it misses the point. It tends to make mission a burden rather than a joy, to make it a part of the law rather than a part of the gospel. If one looks at the New Testament evidence one gets another impression. Mission begins with a kind of explosion of joy. The news that the rejected and crucified Jesus is alive is something that cannot possibly be suppressed. It must be told. Who could be silent about such a fact? The mission of the Church in the pages of the New Testament is more like the fallout from a vast explosion, a radioactive fallout which is not lethal but life-giving. One searches in vain through the letters of St. Paul to find any suggestion that he anywhere lays it on the conscience of his readers that they aught to be active in mission. For himself it is inconceivable that he could keep silent. "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). But nowhere do we find him telling his readers that they have a duty to do so.*