

# Session Two: Mission is All Around Us

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[ 0 : 00 ] Hey, welcome back to Gospel Growth.

This is our Life on Life discipleship course, and we are in the fourth module. We're looking at going out with the gospel. We're looking at things like mission and what that means and what that's all about.

So far, what we've seen is that mission is for all of us, that every Christian is a missionary. And this time, we're gonna really talk about the question, where is mission?

That might sound like a simple question, but I think a lot of us get it wrong. A lot of Christians or a lot of churches would answer it one of these two ways. Some people would say, mission is over there. And what they mean is it's mission somewhere far away where you need a plane and a couple boats and a canoe and a camel to get to. Other people would say, no, no, no, mission's not there.

[ 0 : 53 ] It's here, it's right here. It's right in our town. It's in our community, it's in our neighborhood. But that's usually the two camps people fall into. It's either over there or it's right here.

Churches will either just be all about the nations or they'll be all about their neighborhood. And so I wanna just say, I think if we've got one of those mentalities, a couple of things are happening. One, we're just immature. And two, we're being disobedient because Jesus wants us to do both. Let me just return you to the Great Commission, Matthew 28.

Jesus says, all authority has been given to me, right? Go therefore into all nations, right? All nations. So this all nations is a big deal. Mature disciples know that mission is all around us. Because of that little phrase, all nations, mission is all around us. Because God made the whole world in the beginning of the Bible. And he made all people in his image. And he made the world and said it was good. And because all people everywhere need the gospel, mission's everywhere, right?

[ 1 : 54 ] Mission's everywhere. Just because we have lots of buildings with steeples in small towns and rural places in America doesn't mean we don't need the gospel. Just because it's dangerous or you might be persecuted in some faraway country doesn't mean we don't take the gospel there.

No, everywhere needs the gospel, right? Mission is all around us. We are to take the gospel, the good news of Jesus to every square inch of the world, right? That means the mission is local and it means the mission is global, right?

It's local and it's global. There was a movie that came out in 99 called The Matrix. It messed with everybody's head. But it made a lot of people for a while at least think, okay, well, what if what I see isn't really what's really going on?

What if there's something behind what I see? I think the Bible shows us that that actually is true. That actually behind the scenes, there's something always happening. We're in this cosmic battle between the kingdom of God and evil and forces of evil and that we, the people of God, everywhere we are locally or globally, we're meant to care about this.

That means that when we go to the grocery store, we're not really going to the grocery store. I mean, we are, but we're not. Because in that grocery store, we're around lots of people who are fighting great battles, many of them who don't know the power of the gospel.

[ 3 : 14 ] It means that when we watch the news, it's not just as it seems, that there's always something else going on behind the scenes and that we're supposed to care about that. We're supposed to care about that because these are people made in God's image and these people need the gospel.

Next thing I would say is that the mission of God includes your neighbors, okay? So it's local and it's global. That means it includes your neighbors. God has put you and I where we are right now because he wants us to be a missionary.

And I can't tell you how many folks I meet and how many years I wasted thinking that one day I'd be somewhere where I could really be an effective witness for God or missionary. No, right now, right now, where you are right now, where you sit at work or at school, where you live, wherever that is for you, right now, God wants to use you to be a missionary.

One of my favorite missionaries is Jim Elliott. He said, wherever you're at, be all there. I think it really encompasses that Acts 17 mindset where we see that God has predetermined allotted periods and boundaries of our dwelling place, that God knew times and places where we live. And so we can spend our life wishing we were somewhere else or praying for our neighbors to move or praying for people at work to die or quit or something, or we can embrace the fact that God put us here and he put us here and he put them here because he wants us to show the gospel to them, right?

[ 4 : 38 ] That's a powerful thing to get your heart and your head around. In light of what it looks like to be a good missionary, I'd say it's good to know that good missionaries are good neighbors and good locals.

We don't just know true things about God. We're kind people. We're loving people. We're compassionate people. I'm not saying that you're Mr. Popular. I'm saying that you're a source of compassion and kindness to those around you, that you make an effort to love and serve those around you, to be a good local, to be a good neighbor.

This is a big deal in small towns and places like where we are anyway. This is a massive deal. You can't just do whatever you want and expect to get away with it. You can't act however you want. In fact, I was just sitting with someone recently who said, man, I quit going to church for two decades because these people were one way on Sunday and someone completely different the rest of the week.

I think a lot of people in small towns feel that way, right? And that's because Christians didn't realize, man, this is not just about believing right things. It's about living differently and loving people around us, right?

Our reputation is massive. It's essential. And so we want to be good neighbors. We want to be good locals. Being a good local, however, that I think it's helpful to see too to connect the dots as Christians that means that we care about our town, that we don't just care about the people in our town.

[ 5 : 59 ] We care about our town, right? Maybe you need a Bible verse for this one. I got one for you. In Jeremiah 29, verse four through seven, it says, thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

So God's like, look, don't waste all this time. Oh, I wish we were back in Jerusalem. No, I put you in Babylon, right? Build houses and live in them. Plant gardens, eat their produce, take wives and have sons and daughters.

And he goes on and on. Multiply there. Do not decrease, but seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile and pray to the Lord on its behalf.

I mean, I wonder how many Christians do this. Really seek the welfare of our city. What if our churches sought the welfare of our cities? What if we prayed to the Lord on their behalf?

Too often, I think that a lot of the ways that Christians or churches interact with their town is they only go to the town when they want something or they only go to the town when they're angry about something.

[ 7 : 02 ] Man, let's be good locals who care about our town, good missionaries who actually care about our city, right? The next thing I want to say to you is that the mission of God is not just neighbors, it's also nations.

It also includes nations. I mean, in the last decade or so, this idea of being a missionary at home has become really popular and we do what we always do, which is overswing the pendulum and now we move away from caring about the nations to only caring about our neighbors.

And I just want to push back on that because that's not maturity either, right? Matthew 24, 14, Jesus says something kind of shocking. He says, Man, this is a big deal to God.

Matthew 28, all ethnos, all people groups, I want you to take the gospel to all of them, right?

Everywhere. That means that our next door neighbors matter and people in places like the 1040 window, which is this geographical region where it's just so lacking in gospel witness.

It means that we care as Christians, not just about our neighbors, but we care about those thousands of people, people groups who don't even have one single scripture translated into their

language.

[ 8 : 22 ] Those millions of people who right now don't have any gospel witness, we care about that. We care about that because it's part of God's mission and we as God's people care about God's mission, right?

When we watch the news and we hear about injustice or suffering, we don't, if you think to yourself something along the lines of, not my problem, you're missing it. You're missing the gospel, right? You're missing it. Those people need Jesus just like you and I need Jesus. And we're meant to get on our knees and pray, God, come. God, your kingdom come. God, your will be done. God, use me any way you can, right?

This is what it looks like to really own that the mission is everywhere. It's local and it's global. It's neighbors and it's nations. And we care about both. I'd love to encourage you in your group discussion to really talk about this.

Which one of those things appeals to you more? If it's nations, kind of trace that back. Why? If it's neighbors, you know, why? Why not nations? Why not neighbors? Talk about that.

[ 9 : 20 ] Pray for each other. Encourage each other. Think about, you know, ways that God can use you. If it's just neighbors, what can you do to begin to really care about the nations?

Maybe it's adopt a church plant to pray for. Maybe it's sponsor a child and through compassion. I don't know what that is, but just begin to think about that. If it's, man, I just care about the nations, but I'm not, I'm a really bad local.

I'm a really bad neighbor. Okay, what are some ways that you can begin to walk out repentance and love and serve the people around you? God bless you guys.