

Session One: Mission is for Everyone

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

This is our Life on Life discipleship program, and we are in our fourth module for this year. We're looking at going with the gospel, going out with the gospel. And we didn't save this till the end because it's not that important, but it really makes sense towards the end because we've talked about who Jesus is and what the gospel does and how it forms us in community.

And this is the natural byproduct of all of that. And I guess that's the last thing I would say is that this is not optional. This is not extra credit. You know how when you're in school and extra credit always falls at the end.

It's something that you could do if you really wanted to. The worst thing we can do is treat mission like that. And I think a lot of Christians do. I think a lot of churches do. I think they probably focus a lot on knowing Jesus and they probably focus a lot on community.

And they focus a lot on growing in discipleship and the word, but they treat mission like it's extra credit. And that's to our demise to do that. That's to our absolute demise.

[1:07] I think when we do that, we see a church get really messy. When we're not on mission, we bring out the worst in each other. Gossip, slander, pettiness.

Those are all products of a group of people who are following Jesus, but they're not on mission. And so they don't have any unifying cause together. And so they turn on each other.

The opposite is true though. When we get on mission, we bring out the best in each other. We start realizing we need each other. We put aside petty things and we don't have time for that kind of nonsense.

We really get excited about working together. And we have a common enemy and a common cause and a common hope. And we recognize there's unique gifting. And it just brings out the absolute best in us when we're on mission together.

And so don't treat it like extra credit. This is essential. In fact, it's essential to us having really healthy Christianity. So this week, we're gonna lay out some just foundations around mission.

[2:06] And the first thing I wanna say is that the mission of God is the most important thing on planet Earth. When we use the word mission, what we're using is this phrase, this Latin phrase, *missio dei*, which means the mission of God or the sending of God.

And this is the most important thing on planet Earth because God made the Earth, God made everyone. And what God's doing in the Earth is what matters the most, right? I love this quote. It is impossible, Bible in hand, to limit Christ's church to one's own little community. There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence where Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry, mine.

And so when we get our heads and our hearts around this, that the whole world is God's, and then we think about what's going on in the whole world, we start to realize, man, this, the work of God, the mission of God, the sending of God is the most important thing on planet Earth.

It has the power to save. It's what the whole world needs. It's what every single person on planet Earth needs right now more than anything else, right? But how does this mission get lived out? Well, the first thing that we see in the New Testament is that God sends Jesus, his only son, but then Jesus turns around and sends us.

[3:16] In John 20, we see this in verse 21. Jesus said to his disciples, peace be with you as the Father has sent me, even so I'm sending you.

And so this is what we get. God sends Jesus, Jesus sends us, okay? This really comes to a head at this moment called the Great Commission, which I'm gonna read to you in a minute, but it's important to just say before we get into this that the Great Commission is not a good suggestion.

Again, this has been treated a lot like optional extra kind of stuff, and it's not. It's crucial, right? I'll read it for you. Matthew 28, verse 18. And Jesus came and said to them, his disciples, all authority in heaven and on Earth has been given to me.

Just think about that, that there's no one more powerful than Jesus. He has all the authority. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Now his I've got all authority comment there should lead us to really lean in and listen to the next thing he says, because this is the person who's in control. Everyone answers to him. And this is what he tells them to do. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you.

[4 : 32] And behold, I am with you to the end of the age. Jesus comes back with all authority and he gives this message. This isn't a brainstorming session. Jesus isn't saying, does anyone have any ideas of what we should do next?

Jesus comes and he gives his disciples marching orders. He's back from the dead. He holds the keys to death, hell and the grave. And he says, here's what I want you to do, right? So this is not a suggestion. This is a commission, right?

Just like Jesus was sent with a purpose, Jesus now sends us with a purpose. Our purpose is not to try to keep out of trouble until he comes back. No, our purpose is to be on mission, to join in the sending of God, the mission of God, right?

So our purpose is to go as ambassadors with a very specific message. We have a king who's conquering, who's made a way for peace, surrender to his terms, right? So this is what we're sent to do.

The next thing that I think is important to understand is that, and we talked about this already earlier, is that the gospel is good news that must be shared. It's good news that must be shared.

[5 : 34] We learned at the beginning how the gospel isn't good advice, it's good news. It's life-changing, history-altering good news. And that good news doesn't just change our lives, it changes our purpose for life.

And also, it's meant to come out of us, right? The gospel is meant to be heralded. It's meant to be proclaimed. It's meant to be shouted from the highest rooftop. This is meant to happen, okay?

Charles Spurgeon said, I will not believe you've tasted of the honey of the gospel if you're content to eat it all by yourself. And this is what we see. We're not meant to be able to contain this.

It's meant to explode out of us because, man, look how good God is. In John 4, Jesus encounters this woman at the well, and she's got a very mixed, sordid past, five different husbands.

She's with the guy now. We can't tell if she's paying for the rent with sex. We can't tell what's going on there necessarily, but, man, she's in a bad way. And Jesus encounters her, and he loves her, and he speaks truth to her, and he values her.

[6 : 35] What does she do next? In John 4, 28, the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, come, see a man who told me all I ever did.

Could this be the Christ? And they went out of the town, and they were coming to him. That's what's meant to happen for us when we meet Jesus. We're meant to immediately begin to want to invite other people to meet Jesus.

It's good news. It must be shared. This means that every single disciple is a missionary. Every Christian, every disciple is a missionary. Spurgeon, again, he said that every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.

You are a missionary. I'm a missionary. The question is, are we a good one or a bad one, right? That's really what the question is. This is what we're meant to do. But a lot of us think that other people are missionaries.

Maybe it's pastors. Maybe it's church staff. Maybe it's our community group leaders. Maybe it's single people. They make good ones. Or young married couples. They make good ones. Or older couples whose kids have moved out.

[7 : 36] They make great missionaries. Or whatever. It's always somebody else. It's always somebody else. But man, the truth is that being a missionary is just synonymous with being a follower of Jesus.

We're meant to be caught up in the sending of God and to tell the world how good Jesus is, right? This is not something that we graduate into, and it's not something we retire from.

It's something that spans the whole length and width of our journey following Jesus here on earth. In fact, the more mature that we get in following Jesus, the more caught up we are in the mission of God, right?

Just like the more that I love my wife, the more that I find myself wanting to be a part of what she loves. The same thing with my kids. The more I get to know them, and the more my heart loves them, the more I want to be with them.

And I want to be caught up in what they're caught up in. The more that you and I get to know God, the more that we realize, man, what does he want? He wants all ethnos, all peoples to hear the gospel.

[8 : 36] And we get swept up in that. And his dream becomes our dream, right? That we love what he loves. Now, here's just a few quick things I want you to know. Disciples are prone to standing and staring instead of going.

That's just discipleship 101. Somewhere in us is this inclination to stand and stare, rather to go and obey. We see this right at the beginning in Acts 1, verse 6.

The disciples had come together. Jesus was there with them. And this is what they said to him. And, you know, Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel? He's just come back from the dead.

I mean, they haven't done a single thing yet. And they're basically asking the kind of classic kid question, are we there yet? Right? And so Jesus says, look, it's not for you to know that the times or the seasons, the Father is fixed by his own authority.

But you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. You'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in Judea and in all Samaria and the ends of the earth. And when he said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up and a cloud took him out of their sight.

[9 : 40] And I like this next little line. And while they were gazing into heaven as he went, behold, two men stood in white robes and said, Essentially what these angels come and say is, hey, stop staring at the sky.

He'll be back. Go do what he said. Right? But this is the inclination of disciples from the very beginning. Go and do this. And we find ourselves caught up in either standing and staring at the sky or we get in these sort of Christian cul-de-sacs where we just go around and around and around wasting years without ever doing what Jesus said.

So that's one thing you should know. The second thing is that mission has corporate and it has personal responsibilities. There's things that we do as a church together on mission. We impact, you know, the nations through church planning.

And we impact our communities through getting behind local nonprofits and serving the addicts and the broken and the downcast. And then there's things that I do. And there's things that you do. It's not just that mission is writing checks to the church.

No, that's one piece. But mission's also you and I involved. And we'll talk about this a lot as we go on in this module. But we involved, us involved in people's lives. Right?

[11 : 00] Right? Here's a great way to say it is that there's your thing, there's my thing, and then there's our thing. There's things that God's going to put on your heart and you're going to get excited about and you're going to help with.

And there's the same things for me. But not all of your things are going to be my things. And not all of, you know, our things are going to be our things. Right? Some things as a church we're really going to get behind and we want to do that together. It's when the fingers come together and really become a fist and we make an impact.

And then there's some things where God's going to really put you and I in little groups together and we're going to do this on our own. So that's another thing. And the last thing I want to just put before you is that as a church, just remember that we want to be a church that's mission focused.

In 1 Corinthians 14, we see this charge. Paul says, basically, be a church that thinks about outsiders and unbelievers. Think about people who aren't yet part of you. And in Acts 2 and 3 and 4, we get to see the early church living in such a way where the community was changed because of what they did.

We don't want to just have little Sunday meetings and Wednesday nights and our community not be different. We want the community to be different because we're here. Right? We want to come together and bring out the best in each other, not the worst in each other.

[12:09] We as a church, we want to be a kingdom outpost. In our community, that puts on display the best news the world has ever heard. That's what we want to do together. So I want to encourage you now as you jump into your growth groups to take a few minutes to discuss.

Just be honest. Talk about, you know, I didn't know I was a missionary. Or if I'm a missionary, I'm not a good one. Or, man, I used to be a good one, but I've really slacked off. Or here's some areas where I'm seeing God really use me.

Then pray for each other and encourage each other. We love you guys.