



#3 "Shared Mission"
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Introduction and Background

I love Sundays because it is a chance to join together in community on mission. A term often used to being on mission with God is "Missio Dei," literally the "Mission of God" or "the sending of God," and it refers to His plan to draw all people unto Himself. His plan to accomplish this started the moment man chose to walk away from Him. He sent His Son Jesus, the ultimate example of being on Mission with God, to show us the way and has passed the baton to us, the Church, to continue.

Last week we looked at a number of the by-products of coming together in community as the Church. We saw how we have harmony in our lives, acceptance of one another, a dependence on one another to grow together, and a deep love for others in the body of Christ, His Church. But while these are wonderful aspects of church life to enjoy, they are not the main reason why we come together as believers. When we consider how the New Testament Church, a small and scattered group of people after the death of Jesus, was able to spread across the known world, we come to understand how mission was core to what they believed, what they did, and who they were. Core to all that we do is mission; reaching out in the name of Jesus and proclaiming His love to others by word and deed.

1. Primary to our understanding of Mission is the Great Commission found in **Matthew 28:16-20**. What are the actions that are described in these verses?
2. What were the actions of Jesus in this portion of scripture compared to the actions of his followers?
3. Verse 19 states, "**Go** therefore and make disciples of all nations." A better translation from the original Greek of that verse would accurately read, "**As you** go make disciples of all nations." Reread the verse with this subtle change made. What is the difference between being told to "Go" or being told, "As you go"?"
4. Just as we are drawn to different areas in helping take responsibility for our church community, why do you think that we are more drawn to some areas of Mission than others? Read **Romans 12: 4-6** to gain an understanding of why this is OK. Share where you are most drawn to in mission.

5. The following is a specific list of people that Jesus calls us to reach out to. There are many other references in the Old Testament to caring for others and seeing justice done. Read the list and the scriptures that come with it and see if some of these resonate more deeply with some members of your small group than others.
- Hungry, Thirsty, Strangers - Matthew 25:35
 - Naked, Sick, Prisoners – Matthew 25:36
 - Orphans, Widows – James 1:27
 - Lost – Luke 19:10
 - Poor, Blind, Oppressed – Luke 4:18
 - Crippled, Lame – Luke 14:13
 - Lepers, Deaf – Matthew 11:5
6. What are some categories that you could use when thinking about folks that we are called to reach out to?
7. Discuss how you feel when you are involved in mission. Remember, you can be real and share struggles in mission as well as good feelings because mission can be messy!
8. Read **Hebrews 13:16**. When we get involved in mission, what is the result for us?
a. Is this the motivation behind being involved in mission?
9. Why are we involved in mission?
10. What are some of the challenges of being on Mission with God?
11. What does the *missio dei* look like for us as individuals, us as small groups, and us as a church body in the context of Acts 1:8?
a. Locally
b. Regionally
c. Nationally
d. Globally

In conclusion, consider these words by David Platt, a pastor and director of the International Mission Board, one of the largest mission agencies in the world.

“The message of Biblical Christianity is not “God loves me, period,” as if we were the object of our own faith. The message of Biblical Christianity is “God loves me so that I might make him- his ways, his salvation, his glory, and his greatness – known among all the nations. God is the object of our faith and Christianity centres around Him. We are not the end of the gospel; God is.”