

Missional Living: From Obscurity to Community

Before we jump into talking about what “Missional Living” means for us today, on our campuses and in our dorms, we need to first figure out where this term comes from. What does the Bible say about it? And not just part of the Bible, but the whole Bible. I would therefore like to take the first few minutes to establish a “Whole-Bible Missiology.” I know what you’re thinking, “Ahh he just said the ‘M’ Word.”

Whole-Bible Missiology

- The ‘M’ Word in our culture
 - You’ve experienced the attitude: “We are missional missionaries who seek to have sound missiology and are committed the Great Commission. Our mission is to be on mission for God and go to the deepest darkest corners of the world to evangelize the lost with gospel of Jesus Christ; to engage in apologetics and epistemology and share our biblical soteriology, ecclesiology, and to combat dispensationalist theology with covenantal eschatology.”
 - It sounds a little over the top doesn’t it? We might as well be talking about proctology. Yeah, gross, I know. It makes me tense up the same way.
 - This unreal view of the ‘M’ word unfortunately causes many of us have an improper understanding of this subject, which causes some to be fearful, passive, or zealous to the detriment of the gospel and to themselves.
 - Missionary = A bad word in closed countries. Why?
 - Lost people don’t understand it and we don’t either
- Traditional View
 - Theology - study of God and what he does
 - Missiology - study of what we do in relation to God
- Define Mission(s)
 - The ‘s’ is a strictly Americanized part of this word
 - This leads us to view it solely as a verb and look only at one aspect - “sending”
 - While sending is certainly a part of Biblical Mission it is not the only component
 - We will explore why we should view the bible through the lens of God’s Mission
- Define Missionary
 - Traditionally - “someone ‘sent’”

- Someone paid by an agency to go to another country to proselytize non-believers.
- Preferred term (our definition of Mission will help us understand): “Mission-Partners”: both God and man at work
 - (Eph. 2:10) - we are his workmanship, created in Christ for good works
- Define Missional (adj.)
 - Missional is to *mission* what covenantal is to *covenant* or fictional is to *fiction*
- Define Missiology
 - The study of Mission. Whew! That one was complicated!
- As we study what ‘Missional Living’ means, we should know who is involved:
 - Genesis 1-3 (Creation to Fall)
 - Genesis 4-11 (Sin-Judgement-Covenant-Nations-Sin)
 - Genesis 12-Rev. 22 (The Grand or Gospel Narrative)
 - Read Gen. 12:1-3 (NIV)

[1 The LORD had said to Abram, “Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you.
2 “I will make you into a great nation,
and I will bless you;
I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.
3 I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;
and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you.”]

- Contrast with 11:4
 - What NT verse does Genesis 12 remind you of (Matt. 28:18-20)?
 - This is the first commission
 - Who’s acting here?
 - Therefore, it is preferred to view Mission as:
- Mission defined = “*our committed participation as God’s people, at God’s invitation and command, in God’s own mission within the history of God’s world for the redemption of God’s creation*” -Christopher Wright
- Conclusion - It is therefore important that we see that the Bible doesn’t just contain a bunch of passages about mission(s), but that the whole Bible is itself a “Missional Phenomenon.”
- Thus, the Bible is about God’s mission to redeem humanity to himself.

God's Mission is Good News!

Like “missions” and “evangelism” another word that has become commonplace in our culture is “gospel.” If you go to UNC, then you hear this word all the time. If you look on our website you will see that we call ourselves a “Gospel-centered Community.” I wonder, though, how many of us have grown calloused to the power of this word. We think that, because we know the story of Jesus, are part of a campus ministry, and go to church that we “know” the gospel.

- J.D. Greear, in his book, *Gospel*, says this: “Being able to articulate the gospel with accuracy is one thing; having its truth captivate your soul is quite another.”
- The word for gospel in the NT is *euangelion*. It's build out of a prefix that means good or joyful and a root word that means message or news.
 - What this means is that the Gospel is Joyful News!!! The kind of news that you can't wait to share with everyone you see!
 - Facebook analogy - think about the “News Feed” on Facebook. People share some of the dumbest stuff. Here some real statuses that people have posted:
 - “I sincerely don't know how to spell sincerely without spell check. Sincerely, Jim”
 - “What's that feeling called when you finally agree on what to order, then you call and the place is closed?”
 - “Unfollow, Unfriend, & Delete are the Stop, Drop & Roll safety instructions when it comes to the internet's most annoying people.”
 - “Just spent another day totally agreeing with everything pretty girls say.”
 - “If you're wondering, there's just a 1 in 21 trillion chance any satellite debris will hit that Flo lady from the Progressive commercials.”
 - “Lady just knocked 2 Barbra Streisand CDs over at Starbucks cash register. I immediately wrestled her to the ground.”
 - Remember, life isn't about accumulating stuff. It's about making people insanely jealous of your stuff.”
 - “I love Greek yogurt and people.”
 - “Cure for world hunger: eat squirrels. Bam!”
 - And my personal favorite: “I just applied armpit deodorant to the outside of my jeans because they smell like cheese made from dog milk. BUT - my hair looks amazing.”
 - This reason talk about this stuff is because it's fresh on their minds. It's NOT because their outgoing or extroverted... or intelligent

- The reason we don't talk about the gospel is because it's not fresh on our minds! We think about the gospel as some event that happened 2k years ago that we are reminded of at Easter.
 - "The gospel is not just the diving board off of which we jump into the pool of Christianity; it is the pool itself." -JD
 - "The gospel isn't one class among many that you'll attend during your life as a Christian - the gospel is the whole building that ALL the classes take place in!" -C.J. Mahaney

Let's look at Paul's reminder of the gospel:

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

[1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance[a]: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures]

- There is so much going on in this passage (Death By Love, Driscoll/Breshears):
 - Continual - like we said, "It's the pool": we must be continually reminded of it
 - personal - we must personally receive it in faith
 - essential - we must continually cling to it alone for the assurance of salvation
 - central - it is the most important truth in the world
 - eternal - it is *passed* from one generation to the next without modification by religion
 - Christological - it is all about Jesus
 - penal - the wage of sin (death) was paid
 - substitutional - Jesus in our place
 - biblical - it is in agreement and the fulfillment of all of Scripture
 - eschatological - the resurrection reveals our future hope of eternal life with Jesus
- However, there are two major things I want to focus on:
 - **Proclamational** - the gospel must be preached
 - I once heard John Piper say, "The Holy Spirit does not go where the gospel has not been preached."

- We were God’s plan for accomplishing His mission of reconciling others to Himself. Martin Luther used to say that it wouldn’t matter how many times Christ died if no one ever heard about it. Salvation is a gift you have to receive, and you can’t receive it, you can’t put faith in it if you’ve never heard about it, and we are the only way they will hear about it. (JD)
 - “men are God’s method” -E.M. Bounds
- We are God’s Plan A and there is no Plan B. It doesn’t exist. This is why Jesus charged his disciples to “Go:”
- Missions Agency: When’s the last time you led someone to Christ?
 - The Great Commission (Matt28:18-20):
 - [And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.]
 - This mission is emphasized even more when the Greek text of the passage is studied, and it is seen with the words go, baptize, and teach are all participles which derive their force from the one controlling verb “make disciples”
 - There are no shortcuts.
 - They were not commanded to go give drive-by’s of the the gospel. They were called to go, live life with people, invest in relationships and make disciples.
 - Also, Jesus did not want them to be loan-ranger missionaries out on conquest. Jesus didn’t do this and he doesn’t expect us to do this.
 - He sent people out in pairs while still on earth
 - Mark 6:7 (the twelve)
 - Luke 10:1 (the 70)
 - So here’s the picture: disciple-making disciples that are full of the Spirit of God, living in fellowship with one another, who are on the move, armed in ALL the authority in heaven and earth.
 - Are you picking up on the theme here?
 - Groups of people, pairs, more than one?
- **Community** - Look back at the passage in 1 Corinthians 15.
 - Who is he preaching to?
 - He is preaching it to “brothers and sisters”

- God made a promise to Abraham and fulfilled that promise in Christ. Jesus came, lived perfectly in our place, died our death, conquered death, and gave us his Holy Spirit, through whom we have the ability to grasp the truth of his Word, share this Truth in boldness, and be bound together in fellowship with others who have received the same spirit.
- We are not just *ekklesia*, the called out ones. Not just brought from death to life, from dark to light, but we are also *koinonia*, brothers. We are family. We have been called INTO relationship with one another.
 - Show “How to Start a Movement” video
- We are a bunch of people that God has saved living in ongoing celebration at the JOYOUS NEWS we now know inviting everyone who crosses our path to join the party because it’s a party that never ends and it’s host is the King who sits on a forever throne. We are no longer exiles, but we are invited to the table, not just as subjects, but as friends of the King; and greater still, as His children, called from the graveyard and given a crown of royalty! This is a party for the ages and everyone is invited!!!!!!!!!!
- So we’re called to share

Reality Check: We don’t share. Why?

- Idols
 - “The opposite of the gospel is idolatry.” -Mark Driscoll
 - What are your idols?
 - Comfort
 - Passiveness
 - Dudes! You suck! You’re all turds.
 - If you spent half as much time reading your Bible or praying as you do playing video games or watching Sports Center you would wake up to the urgency of the gospel!
 - I know this first hand! I love Sports Center! When I was in college, I was a turd.
 - You deflect responsibility because you refuse to be inconvenienced
 - This is ‘Pragmatic Universalism’
 - This is a practical, behavioral agreement with guys like Rob Bell and Brian McClaren who wrongly distort verses like: 1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pe 3:9
 - Error: God’s will is that none perish. All to be saved.
 - Distinction between Secret Will and Revealed Will

- Gk word, Theleo - means desire
- Thus, it's God's revealed desire that none should perish
 - That's why he called you!!! He doesn't want them to die without the gospel, but you won't wake up to that because you refuse to be inconvenienced. You say don't agree with the "Love Wins" mentality, but your behavior is exactly the same as theirs!
- Fear
 - Fear of Man
 - I live in an introverted, cynical, secretive culture
 - Answer: Community!!! They will see Gospel-centered community!
 - Love one another!
 - (John 13:35) *"By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."*
 - Fear of not knowing enough
 - Missional Living does NOT equal knowledge; it means being teachable
 - They were indeed "unlearned and ignorant" according to the world's standard (Acts 4:13), but they were teachable.
 - Jesus can use anyone who wants to be used
 - KNOW HIM!!!
 - To know someone you have to be with them!
 - (Luke 8:10) Knowledge was gained by association before it was understood by explanation
 - We are not given permission in Scripture to fear anything but God Himself
 - Yet, we are limited by our fears. At the core this is a belief issue:
 - JD - 2 kinds of belief
 - Mental acknowledgement: belief even the demons have, and tremble
 - Belief in the heart (John 15 -): an intimate knowledge of, and abiding in, the truths of the gospel
- Intellect
 - Many of you are driven by the idol of intellect
 - Your future rests in playing your cards right, getting good grades, and following the plans you have laid out for yourself.

- You are so committed to your own personal rationale that outside of going to church and praying for meals, you approach the gospel in the same way as the world.
 - 1 Cor. 1:18 - the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing...but it is the power of God
- At the core it is a lack of belief
 - JD - 2 kinds of belief
 - Mental acknowledgement: belief even the demons have, and tremble
 - Belief in the heart (John 15 -): an intimate knowledge of, and abiding in, the truths of the gospel
 - Listen, I'm not trying to make you feel guilty. Guilt trips don't accomplish anything besides making us feel guilty. I simply want you to see the disconnect between what we say we believe and the way we behave.
 - "To see spiritual fruit in your life, don't focus primarily on the fruits. Focus on Jesus' acceptance of you, given to you as a gift." -JD
- What do we need?
 - The Holy Spirit
 - We will not accomplish anything without the Spirit
 - Story of sharing with Kerim - I believe, but it's not for me
 - I managed to connect with him on an intellectual level, but not on a spiritual level.
 - The a life full of the Spirit always points back to Jesus.
 - *The Spirit of God always insists on making Christ known.* -Robert Coleman
 - Gospel Community
 - I'm not talking about organized, institutionalized church. We need to be in a community that is continually reminded of the gospel.
 - "This is the picture. The plan of Christ is not dependent on having the right programs...but on building and being the right people - a community of people - who realize that we are ALL enabled and equipped to carry out the purpose of God for our lives." -David Platt
 - Let's just be honest. Sharing the gospel in community sounds way easier than going at it alone.
 - At the end of the day... We've gotta share.
 - Show Penn Gillette video

The Stats of Sharing

In Turkey: If I was loan Christian and lived there for 55 years. I would have to share the Gospel with 3736 people a day just for each of them to have a chance to hear. That's 156 people an hour without stopping to eat or sleep.

At UNC: 16,000 undergrads. Let's say you are the only Christian. Let's only give you one year. You are only there 8ish months out of the year. In order for all to hear, you would need to share with 64 people a day. Let's say you slept, ate, and went to class and used 8 hours a day to share so people could hear. That's 8 people an hour.

Let's say all 80 people in BCM at UNC shared their faith. $16000/80=200$. You would then need to share the Gospel with .80 people every day. **IF YOU JUST SHARED THE GOSPEL WITH ONE PERSON EVERY WEEKDAY, THEN EVERY STUDENT ON THE CAMPUS AT UNC WOULD HAVE HAD A CHANCE TO HEAR THE GOSPEL IN JUST 8 MONTHS!** And that's assuming there are only 80 believers there.

How could you not share?