

Why Church?

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WE ARE LIVING ON PURPOSE

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MESSAGE NOTES

... Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." — John 20:21

... they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. — Acts 14:26 – 27

So many no longer see the Christward life as an adventure. We see it as a duty, a chore, a list of dos, don'ts, and how-tos. We think the point of life is to stay as safe and undisturbed as possible. The stories we read in Acts are about the church "turning the world on its head" (Acts 17:6). — Mark Buchanan, *Your God is Too Safe*

... I will build My church, and the gates of Hades [Hell] will not overcome it. — Matthew 16:18

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. — Philippians 1:12

The good news about Jesus spread rapidly in the first two centuries during a time when faith in Christ was illegal and suspect; there were no dedicated church buildings; few could read; very little access to written Scripture; and no Bible colleges or seminaries. Do we regard the current Covid 19 restrictions as an existential threat to the Church, OR do we see them as an opportunity to re-capture the Missionary nature of The Church (as SENT ones), and a PERFECT time to re-envision, equip, resource every follower of Jesus to live on Mission — starting right where they already are? Do we see: Obstacles or Fresh Opportunity? — Phil Kingsley, global leader and teacher

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
— Matthew 28:18 – 20

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight. — Acts 1:8 – 9

Without the Spirit, Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, even impossible. There can be no life without the life-giver, no understanding without the Spirit of Truth, no fellowship without the unity of the Spirit, no Christlikeness of character apart from His fruit, and no effective witness without His power. As a body without breath is a corpse, so the church without the Spirit is dead. — John Stott

"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus. — Acts 4:12 – 13

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It's not the nature of God to limit His risks and cover His bases. ... Have you thought about His handling of the gospel? God needs to get a message out to the human race, without which they will perish. What's the plan? First, He starts with the most unlikely group ever: a couple of prostitutes, a few fishermen with no better than a second-grade education, a tax collector. Then He passes the ball to us. Unbelievable. — John Eldredge, Wild At Heart

And so it was with me, brothers and sisters. When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or human wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God's power. — 1 Corinthians 2:1 – 5

If we're going to impact our world in the name of Jesus, it will be because people like you and me took action in the power of the Spirit. Ever since the mission and ministry of Jesus, God has never stopped calling for a movement ... to follow Him into the world and unleash the remarkable redemptive genius that lies in the very message we carry. — Alan Hirsch, The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." — Revelation 7:9 – 10

What about us?

- Are we committed to this local church, no matter what costs and inconveniences that entails?
- Are we operating like a healthy body, every part doing its part, to see our whole community flourish?
- Are we passionate about showing Jesus to the world no matter what sort of obstacles we face?

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DISCUSSION

- What was one statement or idea you recall from last weekend's message?
- How would you describe the mission Jesus was on while He walked among us?
- As He was preparing to leave, what did He instruct His followers to do (see Matthew 28:19 – 20)? What are some practical ways we can help carry out that mission?
- Where did He say the power to fulfill that mission would come from (see Acts 1:8)?
- When you think very personally and practically of living on mission with Jesus, what comes to mind?
- What are some things that distract us or discourage us from that mission?
- Daniel shared an illustration where two movie cases were referenced: Indiana Jones' first movie, *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*, and a sewing machine instructional video. Then the question: "When you look around at churches today, which of these videos would you say best captures the essence of the Christian life?" What would you say and why?
- How do you think it might transform the way we view our faith journey, if we approached each day as a new adventure with Christ — on mission?
- How does being close in community with other believers help us stay encouraged and on mission?
- What could you do in your upcoming week to stay more aware and focused on your mission with Jesus?