

Everyday Mission

Making Disciples in the Everyday: Living the Great Commission, week #6

Mission: A Lifestyle, not an Event

To biblically ground our subject tonight of *Everyday Mission*, I'd like you to turn to 1 Peter 2. The book of 1 Peter is a good book to study in our day, because it is written to equip the church for life and ministry under the lordship of Christ in a context which is hostile to the gospel. That's evident by all the references to suffering and the experience of rejection and hostility for doing what is good (and it's not just physical assault and imprisonment, but slander and malicious accusations, 2:12, 15, 3:9, 16). Christians were being slandered, excluded and marginalized.

Increasingly, this is the context in which we live in here in America. The good news of Jesus, and those confess Him as Lord and Savior, are becoming increasingly marginalized in our society, and I see no reason to expect that this mindset is going to change. Our society has no time for the message of Jesus, they don't care about the product that we put out on Sunday morning, and our allegiance to Jesus as King puts us on a collision course with the values and priorities of the world around us. The Christian conscience is dissolving and we are missionaries in a foreign, hostile land.

This is the context in which 1 Peter is written. The theme of the people of God as strangers and exiles is a recurring one in 1 Peter; our identity has so radically shifted that we are no longer at home in our country of birth. This idea of the people of God as strangers and exiles shows up in chapter 2:

"⁹But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out

of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (Notice identity leading to action)

¹¹Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. ¹²Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation." (so we're all worship leaders)

The call here is to be a distinctively attractive people: not of the world (v.11), but sent into it (v.12) as God's missionary people. And while it has to be the gospel word that brings people to faith and repentance, notice that it's our conduct and good deeds that Peter says has attractional power. And while I won't take the time to read it all, the following verses apply the vision here to a wide range of everyday life: governing authorities and the institutions of society (v.13-17), the workplace (v.18-25), the home (3:1-7), our care and love for one another (3:8-12), culminating in 3:15, where he says that you're going to have to be prepared to give an answer to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. In other words, you're going to live the kind of life among these people (so attractive and "salty") that it demands a gospel explanation.

As Peter lays it out, it's all very ordinary. In calling every Christian to a missionary lifestyle (2:9-12), he does not present a complex model for how to reach our culture with the gospel. Instead, he describes the new identity of his readers and shows them how that new identity works itself out in the everyday structures and rhythms of life among those who don't believe. What is meant to attract the unbelieving is not our services, events and programs, but the quality of our lives, especially our life in community.

So living out the missionary vision of 1 Peter is about making disciples in the everyday. It's grasping that church is not an event, but a

community. It's grasping that mission is not an event, but a lifestyle. It is, as we have said already, about living ordinary life with gospel intentionality, applying our gospel identity to every nook and cranny of life, and when we do that "among the Gentiles", it becomes everyday mission.

Tonight we're going to think through some of those everyday rhythms of life (sort of like Peter lays that out for his readers), and how to enter into those with greater intentionality for the sake of seeing not-yet believers get exposed to the good news of Jesus. We cannot convert anyone, but we can make it our ambition to live in such a way that every man, woman and child has an opportunity to hear the good news of Jesus, and see its implications lived out in the ordinary lives of His people.

Everyday Rhythms

Story-formed

We understand, experience and intersect with God's Story and Other's.

Listen

We set aside regular times to listen to God both backward and forward.

Celebrate

We gather together to celebrate God's extravagant blessings.

Bless

We intentionally bless others through words, gifts or actions.

Eat

We regularly eat meals with others to invite them into the community of God.

Recreate

We take time to rest, play, create and restore beauty in ways that reflect God to others.

What's Next?

The Holy Spirit is the means by which we accomplish Jesus' mission. He is the One who makes Jesus known, He is the One who convicts of sin, He is the One who regenerates our hearts, He is the One who changes us into Christ's image, He is the One who gifts us so we can build up the Body in love, He is the One who empowers us to kill sin, He is the One who emboldens us to declare the good news to those who don't know Him. How liberating this is to believe! Let's trust Him to fulfill His job description; He'll do it!

So as we close, I'd like to turn the question around and ask every individual here: what's next? Specifically, I'd encourage each of you to do the following:

- 1. Ask God to put one person on your mind who is not a follower of Jesus.*
- 2. Quietly listen until He answers*
- 3. When He does, because He will, ask the Spirit, "What's Next with this person?"*
- 4. Quietly listen until He answers*

5. When He does, because He will, follow through. It might be to say "hi" next time you see them, it could be to ask them out for coffee. Whatever it is, big or small, follow through.

And if you're in a Life Group, share what the Spirit is saying to you and pray for one another as you follow His leading, and maybe as a group ask the Spirit, "What's next?" in terms of how to bring some of those not-yet believers into contact with your group. And as you take steps, just keep asking Him over and over again, "Lord, what's next?" You may be amazed what the Spirit does, and how it energizes you and your group. It wouldn't be surprising that mission would energize a group, because this is what God has created and redeemed you for, to "proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness and into His marvelous light".