

Missional Living

What is Missional Living?

Our vision is to make growing followers of Jesus who influence others with the gospel for the good of individuals, families, communities, and the world. The phrase 'missional living' is a way of encapsulating this. Missional living means being on mission with Jesus as his followers-- being the hands and feet of Jesus where we live, work, play, and worship. There are many ways to do this, but it begins with and is empowered by worship.

Enjoying Hospitable Worship

It is in gathering together for worship that we are reminded that we bring our burdens to Jesus and find rest in him. In corporate worship we enjoy the welcoming hospitality of God to greet us with the open arms of Jesus. We are reminded as Jesus told his disciples, "Apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). So if we are to be on mission with Jesus we first must be with him to give off the aroma of one graced by Jesus. Regular participation in Sunday worship is vital to following Jesus into the world to engage in missional living.

Engaging in Missional Living

Missional living should not be compartmentalized to one area of your life, but should encompass all of it. Two very broad ways to think of this are through public faith and justice and mercy.

Public Faith

Modern people think faith should be private, but Jesus expects a public faith. Jesus commands us to "love our neighbors as ourselves." He tells us that we are like salt and light. Salt preserves what is good and prevents rot. Light shines through the darkness to show the way, to bring beauty and healing out of dark places. As followers of Jesus we want to carry his beauty, his grace, his truth, his creativity, his compassion, and his justice into the world.

- Public Forums are intentional conversations about things that matter to all people and include all people, whether they believe in Jesus or not. Forums can happen in homes or in larger gatherings at our church. We have to be willing to listen well to the 'other' side and engage in civil conversation about important issues in society. These issues are not only the ones important to you but important to those who are not like you. In such discussions, we must exude truth and grace.
- Work is where you spend a lot of time. You need to think about how your particular job reflects God's character and talents he has given you. You reflect God's character through things like creativity, order, restoration, redemption, beauty, service, and justice. Learn to see your work in light of the gifts God has given you, and then learn how to talk about that with your co-workers.
- Parties and social gatherings with your neighbors and friends are a great way to raise a glass in celebration of life, to demonstrate hospitality, to serve them in the midst of trouble and difficulties, and to turn strangers into friends through the love of Jesus.

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Justice and Mercy

The prophet Micah writes, "What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." Jesus often instructed his followers to care for the poor, the orphan, and widow--the marginalized in society. It is vitally important for our church to help those overlooked in our society. Not only is this following Jesus, but demonstrates to a watching world that we care and want to make a difference for the common good. It is vitally important to remember there is only one Savior and his name is Jesus. We are not the savior helping the poor, and money is not the answer to every problem. Poverty is more nuanced. Biblically speaking, a person can be spiritually, relationally, emotionally, or economically impoverished. To help others requires us to recognize our own poverty and address the whole picture of poverty so that together we learn from each other. To learn more about this read *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. For a quick visual summary, the chart below is helpful.

- Missional Communities are the main way we are trying to inspire you to use your gifts, ideas, and creativity to address issues of justice and mercy in our community. There is a large spectrum of ways this can be done. In effort to support this we have created a Missional Communities Grant Program so you can apply for funding to begin and/or supplement your efforts to lead others in loving people and making a better community.
- Wellspring Counseling is a missional partnership with a separate corporation. We provide space so they can efficiently and affordably help people in relational, emotional, and psychological poverty.

A concluding thought that really should be primary rather than supplemental. Missional Living requires prayer. Prayer is what John Piper refers to as our war time walkie-talkie to marshal the forces of heaven. Your prayers shape what you become. If you pray for patience God brings you opportunities to be patient. If you pray to be the hands and feet of Jesus you will have opportunities to help others. If you pray to speak the gospel to others Jesus will give you opportunities.

In fact, a good developmental exercise would be for you to pray through the chart below asking God to help you better understand your own poverty, the poverty of those around you, and what to do about it.

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Responding to Poverty: When Helping Hurts (Visual book summary)

How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself (Steve Corbett & Brian Fikkert, © 2009) (compiled by Cystle Numan, CRWRC)

