

The Disciplines of Missional Living

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Introduction

Today we're going to be talking about the Disciplines of Missional living. "What is meant by missional living?"

Jesus is asked in Matthew 22, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?"

Matthew 22:37-40

And Jesus said to him, 'YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'³⁸ This is the first and great commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Love God with all your heart, soul, mind AND Love your neighbor

**If what Jesus did ends with you,
then you've missed the point entirely.**

Today we'll talk about three disciplines that will help orient us towards healthy missional living.

What is **healthy** missional living?

Examples — "I want to live on mission... but..."

"Well as long as it doesn't interfere with my family..."

"Well as long as no one takes advantage of me..."

"Well as long as it doesn't interfere with my financial peace..."

"Well as long as it's safe, cause safety is the most important thing..."

Point to faulty mentality

That's like saying, "I want to be a parent, but I don't want it to cost anything or interfere with my schedule, and I don't want them to mess up my house either, and if I can't watch my shows..."

Contrast — "I only do what I see the Father doing" — look at the life of Christ.

John 5:19

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

John 12:50

And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak."

**Healthy missional living is found
in doing and saying what the Father tells you to do.**

"Healthy" missional living will cost you

You can't follow a man who sacrificed His life and claim to want to be like Him and expect life to be nice and neat and clean and comfortable.

The cost of not living on mission is much higher.

If we cave to the temptations of this world and allow what Jesus did to end with us, then we are blocking people of the opportunity to know Jesus.

The abundant life He has for them!

And the mission, He in turn, has for them!

Missional living is hinged on what the Father is doing...

How do you know what the Father is doing?

Through Private devotion and Biblical community

These are foundational when we think about living on mission.

With this foundation in place,

there are three disciplines to help orient us toward living on mission.

Service

*The spiritual discipline of service means **choosing to do something for someone else (often in secret) without expecting anything else in return.** This need is often very practical.*

Galatians 6:2

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Proverbs 3:27-28

Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, When it is in the power of your hand to do so. 28 Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, And tomorrow I will give it," When you have it with you.

Philippians 2:3-4

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of **mind** let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

Service starts with a mentality.

James 2:15-17

If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

We can often be quick to pray for the needs that people bring us — but — do you have an extra jacket?

I was meeting with some of our amazing marriage class facilitators this last week and just checking in. I shared that I've been feeling overwhelmed the last few weeks for a few different reasons.

But one of the women simply asked, "What do you need?"

That simple question reflects the heart of service

What do you need?

We are surrounded by people with needs — and I love that we want to pray for them — but the reality is that the answer is often **you.**

Matthew 20:28

...”the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”
We too, must be disciplined to adopt this posture of serving

Four words – *What do you need? Or How can I help?*

Discipline Number One to orient us towards missional living – Service.

Curiosity

“The discipline of curiosity? What?”

Great question – Look at your being curious!

When we talk about this in our parent classes, we use this phrase:

Disciplined Curiosity

We all have a limit on how curious we are about any given person at any given time, especially when it comes to our kids – we think we know everything about them.

**Disciplined curiosity is choosing to go beyond that limit,
and to continue asking questions.**

If you’re asking questions you think you know the answer to (*not leading questions, actual questions...*) then you’re probably in the ballpark of disciplined curiosity.

Most of us ask a couple of questions, draw a conclusion (or make an assumption), and we move on, or cue up our unsolicited advice (you know what you need to do...?). Or start answering the question we just asked the other person even though they didn’t ask us.

Jesus is the pro at remaining curious.

I recently got to teach at young adults and they were teaching through the book of John

I was given John 18. This is a bad day for Jesus

- Jesus was betrayed by one of his disciples, a guy he lived with, invested in, loved sacrificially, betrayed him.
- He was arrested and bound by a “detachment of troops” (this could be up to 600 troops)
- He was taken and questioned by the high priest and then slapped across the face by one of the officers
- He was denied three times by one of his disciples
- He was taken and questioned by Pilate while a mob of people made it clear they wanted him to die

Yet in the face of all of these things – Jesus displayed curiosity

- The army shows up and he asks – “**Whom do you seek?**”
- Peter cuts a guy’s ear off and asks – “**Shall I not drink the cup which my Father has given me?**”
- He’s questioned by the high priests and gets struck in the face and asks — “**If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?**”

- He's taken to Pilate and questioned by him while a mob of people are outside making it clear that they want him to be killed. And when Pilate says "are you the king of the Jews?" Jesus asks - "**Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?**"

Jesus always asked questions – even in the face of adversity.

If you tally up all the questions asked by Jesus in the four gospels, it's over 300.

A lot of what you see in our culture is the opposite of curiosity

- The way some people use Facebook is the antithesis of curiosity – the calm displayed by Jesus
 - We sit on our self-righteous thrones
 - Fueled by pride, fear, and offense
 - Formulate judgmental opinions filled to the brim with condemnation
 - And share them as though someone is asking us

People still point to Jesus and use Him to justify their behavior. *“Well Jesus got angry and flipped over tables and called people ‘Brood of vipers’...”* You know who He did that to? The Pharisees and Sadducees – that were behaving in the exact way we see on Facebook.

But many of us do that in person – we lack the discipline to remain curious, and we walk around assaulting people with our thoughts, and judgements, and opinions.

Questions to self-evaluate:

- Do I fight to interrupt?
- Feel the need to correct information?
- Do I need to be right?
- Do I struggle when made to feel wrong?
- Do I have a genuine desire to learn from others and understand their perspective?
- In a group, am I more concerned with hearing others, or being heard?

Challenge this week

Pick someone you're comfortable with and only ask questions, then only answer questions that someone asks you. Often we ask questions because we want to answer them. Prepare your heart for comfortability of silence.

Testimony

Testimony is a critical part of living on mission.

One of the main things we talk about is the “social gospel.”

Social gospel – get out there, live on mission and just show people Jesus and don't be so preachy. Just be Jesus to people. The problem is – you can get out there, do a lot of stuff, and meet a lot of practical needs – without ever meeting a person's most pressing need – ***They need a savior.***

1 Peter 3:15

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;

2 Timothy 3:16-4:2

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. 1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 **Preach the word!** Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

That might sound a little intimidating — *“Preach the Word?!, I have hard time even understanding the Word sometimes...”*

I love the simplicity we see at the end of Jesus’ encounter with the Samaritan woman – He knows everything about her life.

John 4:39-42

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." 40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. 41 And many more believed because of His own word. 42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

The simplicity of simply telling what Jesus has done for you.

That results in people having their own encounter with Jesus; And now they have their own testimony.

Close

Am I doing these things well? And healthy?

- If you’re not living in biblical community and private devotion, then you won’t know
- You’ve got to measure that within community
- You’ve got to take that back to God

Matthew 7:22-23

Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done **many** wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

“**Many** wonders...”

- Many, isn’t the goal
- Knowing and being known is the goal
- The scary reality depicted in this scripture is that you can actually live on mission without God
- Biblical community and private devotion
- Intimate relationship with God and community around you made up of people in intimate relationship with God
- That has to be the foundation on which we practice service, curiosity, and sharing of testimony

Discussion Questions

1. How do you define “healthy missional living”?
2. What could it cost you to follow Jesus, who sacrificed His life for you?
3. Is “service” an integral part of your Life Group... within the group, and outside of the group?
4. How can you apply the “discipline of curiosity” to your life daily? What is its benefit?
5. Why does “social gospel” activities need Jesus to be complete?
6. How have you shared your personal testimony? Do you still regularly do it?

NOTES