

sermon study guide

May 8/9, 2021

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“How Then Shall We Live?” Part 3: Pursue Mission

Dr. Henry Schorr

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What memorable lost and found story can you recall?
Would you take the time to help someone find something he/she has lost?
2. How has the pandemic provided opportunities for you to connect with others?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Luke 19:10, 1 Timothy 2:4, John 5:30, John 20:21

3. What was Jesus' main purpose for coming to earth? What was essential for Him to accomplish His mission? How is He accomplishing His mission today?

Read Mark 8:34-36

4. What three things does Jesus say a person must do to be His disciple? Why does Jesus want disciples, not just followers?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

Read Acts 2:42-47

5. Discuss how the early believers followed Jesus' example to live on mission. Describe one way you can have a greater impact for the Lord, especially with the challenges of the current pandemic.

Read Matthew 28:18-20

6. What implications do Jesus' authority and commission have for you to make disciples? How is God calling you this week to submit to His Lordship and live out His mission?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Read I Corinthians 3:6-9. As an individual and as part of a community, what relationships are you cultivating, planting, watering, and harvesting? How can you be more intentional in these areas this week?

THE WORD (NIV)

Luke 19:10

For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.

1 Timothy 2:4

[God our Saviour]...who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth.

John 5:30

By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

John 20:21

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."

Mark 8:34-36

34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. 35 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. 36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?"

Acts 2:42-47

42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. 43 Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. 44 All the believers were together and had everything in common. 45 They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Matthew 28:18-20

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Imagine the great joy and relief you feel after finally finding your lost child in a crowded area. This picture depicts God's joy when His spiritually lost children are found and reconciled to Himself. As Christ's followers, we are called (Matthew 28:18-20) to join God in His mission of seeking and saving the lost. Christ has modelled at least four ways we can effectively partner with God.

Jesus lived in total dependence on His heavenly Father (John 5:30). He would often go to a quiet place to pray. We also need to cultivate our relationship with God. Before we talk to others about Jesus, we need to talk to Jesus about others because only He can change hearts. We must be available at all times to do His will. Even though we may not receive evidence that our obedience has made a difference in someone's life, keep in mind that our labor in the Lord is not in vain (I Corinthians 15:58).

Jesus lived a holy, God-pleasing life (Matthew 3:17). We are the salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13), and God has given us His authority to impact our world for Christ. We are the vehicle through which God's kingdom will come to earth as it is in heaven. People may never read a Bible, but they will read our lives. If we do not live a God-pleasing life, we lose our saltiness and cannot make an impact on others. The important question to constantly ask ourselves is, “What do people see when they read my life?”

Jesus accomplished His mission through a small group of others. We are not meant to live out this mission alone. We are all an important link in the chain of someone coming to faith in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:6-9). The process of bringing others to Christ involves cultivating, planting the seed, watering the plant, and finally harvesting/reaping. Cultivating involves praying and caring for others. Planting entails sharing your faith journey. Watering means encouraging and inspiring others, and lastly, harvesting/reaping is leading people to make a commitment to follow Christ.

Jesus accomplished His mission by loving others sacrificially (Matthew 20:28). Loving others and bringing them to Christ can be costly. We must deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus (Mark 8: 34). Denying ourselves means to put the interests of others above our own. The good Samaritan described in Luke 10:25-37 stopped to help the injured man lying on the road. He has most probably asked himself, “If I do not stop to help this man, what will happen to him?” We, too, should have the same attitude towards others who are in need. Taking up our cross means saying yes to God regardless of the cost. Following Jesus means our hearts are broken by the things that break His heart. Like the early Christians, we can rejoice when we are counted worthy to suffer for the Lord (Acts 5:41).

The early church lived out their mission (Acts 2:42-47) the same way Jesus modelled for us. By devoting themselves to God's command to love others, “the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (v. 47). Likewise, we can see God at work when we give our lives wholly to His mission. We can count on Him to empower us to do His will. May we rely on and live in awareness of God's promise that He will always be with us (Matthew 28: 20). We will simply be amazed at what God can accomplish if we obey His command to love others!