

Putting The Missional In Community

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[0 : 00] This morning, I'm going to talk to you about putting the missional in community. Putting the missional in community. Charles Spurgeon said, every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.

Pretty strong words from Charles Spurgeon there, but I agree with it. Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter. I think it's a great time.

We got our, add another missional community, move some people around. So we got three missional communities. And it's easy to just think of our missional communities as communities. Forget the M and the MC, right? Just think, oh yeah, it's community. It's good people, people I like to be with, people I enjoy being with. But we must never forget about the missional side of things, right?

So as a church, I think this is a great time for us to really focus and lock in on mission. I'm going to look at a few verses. None of these are going to be, these are all very familiar verses to you, but I just want to kind of meditate on them together and just kind of think about them together, okay?

[1 : 09] First one, Luke 19.10. Luke 19.10 is this small little verse here talking about the Son of Man. It says, the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost, okay?

Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Now, oftentimes, most Christians, if they have any bit of health in them, right? If someone comes along their path, you know, and there's an opportunity for the gospel or ask them about Jesus, you would take it, right?

You would talk to them. I mean, that's kind of a no-brainer. If you're a Christian and that isn't happening, you might need to check your spiritual pulse, okay? Say, like, if you actually are, right? That's the gimme. That's what we would most often think, yeah, yeah, yeah. But that's not what this, it's not the only thing this verse said. It didn't just say, well, if people came to Jesus, he would save them.

There's two things he's doing in this verse, right? He's not just saving the lost. He's seeking them. He's seeking them. And I think a lot of Christians live in such a way that if, you know, if someone came my way, you know, if someone at work just started asking me about the Lord or my neighbor got a little curious about what I'm doing every Sunday morning, you know, yeah, then I'd talk to them.

[2 : 29] But my question to you in light of this verse is, do you seek the lost? Or do you just wait till they come to you, you know? And it's easy to do that and it's easy to fall into that as Christians.

But that's not what Jesus did. Jesus wasn't just a saver. He was a seeker when it came to the lost. He not only saved people, but he sought out people to save. He sought out the lost.

He sought, he was on a mission, right? He was on God's mission. God sent him and he sent him to lost people. And we are to do the same.

We'll look at that a little bit more, you know, why that is. But just from the start here, he came to seek and to save. And so my question to you for starters here is, what does your seeking look like when it comes to the lost?

Is it there? Do you do it? Is there any kind of strategic seeking in your life of lost people? Do you ever reorient your life or your plans around how you could reach lost neighbors, lost family members, lost friends?

[3 : 35] Go down the list, whatever, whoever. It doesn't matter, right? Are you just ready in case someone comes along? Are you just praying in case someone comes along or that someone would come along?

Or are you actively seeking out lost people? Looking, how can I connect with lost people? I can get more in relationship to lost people. How can I be more exposed to lost people?

How can I do that together with my church? You see that? Jesus, this is what he was doing constantly. If you look at the Gospels and you're seeing his life, clearly he was doing the work that he was called to do to save.

But that saving didn't just happen on happenstance. He was seeking to save people. And we should do the same thing. And so I want to ask us, are we doing that?

And if you can't answer with some kind of specific way that you're doing that, don't be self-deceived into thinking that you're doing it. We have to be able to be saying, hey, how am I seeking out lost people?

[4 : 34] I think it's a really good challenge for all of us. And it's so easy. You know, it's like D.A. Carson says, nobody drifts into holiness. Well, no one drifts into evangelism either, right?

You have to be intentional. You have to be thinking, how am I going to seek out lost people?

Because you can go your whole life and just not do that really. And just kind of coast.

But especially as a young church plant, we must be people who not just ask God to save the lost, but that we seek lost people, right?

So that's the first thing, seeking and saving. Are you just thinking about the saving and not the seeking part? Secondly, Matthew 4.19, Jesus says to them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men.

Okay? So the first one was seek and save. Second one's following fish, right? When you follow Jesus, something happens. When someone follows Jesus, he automatically makes you into something.

[5 : 40] What is it? A fisher of men. One of the marks of someone who is a follower of Jesus should be that the thing that accompanies those who are followers of Jesus is in their life.

Mainly, he said, if you follow me, I will make you fishers of men. If you're not being made into a fisher of men, you've got to ask the question, am I following Jesus?

Am I following Jesus? Because if you follow him, guess where he's going? He's going to seek and save lost people. And if you're going to follow him, that's where you're going to end up. You're going to end up with lost people.

You're not just going to end up with your, you know, Christian friends. As great as those people are, right? As you follow Jesus, he's going to make you into something specific.

That specific thing that he's making us into is fishers of men. Okay? Fishers of men. Now, if you've ever fished before, most people's, Samir's fished before a few times.

[6 : 44] Okay, if you've ever fished before, most people aren't fishing thinking, oh, it's just really nice to be on the boat and, you know, maybe a fish will come by. Maybe a fish will just jump into my boat.

You know? Nobody does that. Like, I'm just going to go fishing without, I'm going to go fishing without, is someone, is there people parked in the way there or something?

I just saw one of the next door people peer into the window. Might just take a look. Okay, so when you're fishing, typically you would never go out into the boat without a pole or without any bait or anything.

Like that or a net, right? You're going with something to catch fish. It's intentional. You're becoming a fisher of men means you're trying to catch fish.

In the same way, when you follow Jesus, he makes you someone who's intentional while catching souls of men, right? It's something that you're thinking about. It's something that you are strategic about.

[7 : 45] It's something that you are, as far as your life goes, you're thinking, you know what? This is what I want to do. Because as I follow Jesus, the more I follow him, my heart becomes to do what he wants to do.

His will is my will. And the followers of Jesus are made into fishers. The followers of Jesus are made into fishers. Let me ask you the question. Are you being made into that?

Do you have a desire to go fishing? Not for fish, Samir, like for men, right? For men. To say, hey, I want to see people saved.

I want to get out into the, get out there and get in a place where the fish are. Right? If someone said, man, I'm really into fishing and they never go near water.

You'd be like, uh, I don't know about that. I don't think so. No, no, no. I'm really, I love fish. But they never go by the water. Like, I don't think you love fishing.

[8 : 44] Why don't you ever go by the water? It'd be like someone says, well, I love Jesus, but I never go by lost people. And not specifically trying to go fish for lost people.

You got to say, are you following Jesus? Cause that's where he is. And if you follow him, that's where he's going to be. That's where he's going to take you. Okay. So we seek and save and we follow and fish.

Right? Right. A third one, Matthew 28, 18 to 20. Again, these are not obscure verses. You should be familiar with all these, right? This is go and make.

Jesus said to them, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations. Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you and behold, I'm with you always to the end of the age.

Okay? So here you have him saying, go therefore. What is therefore therefore? You know, what is that? What's that all about?

[9 : 45] Well, what was before that? He said, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Again, this is a really important reminder. I would say that one of the main reasons a lot of people don't evangelize is because they think nobody's going to get saved.

I think that's one of the main reasons people don't. It feels hopeless. You feel impotent. You feel like, is this really going to do anything? I mean, I've seen the gospel so many times with people. I haven't seen many people get saved. That's why you can't just think of the go make disciples without thinking of the therefore. He said, go therefore.

Therefore what? Therefore in light of what? The first, right before that, he said, all authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. That's an important part preceding the Great Commission. That the one who's telling you to go and the reason you are to go make disciples, the reason the going is there is because, hey, all authority has been given to you.

It's been given to him and he's the one sending, right? And so if he has authority, you know he's the one who's doing the saving. It's just our job to give people a hearing and it gives you confidence.

[10 : 59] Do you have confidence in the gospel? You know that great verse that Martin Luther got hit with, Romans 1.16, that the gospel itself is the power of God for salvation of those who believe?

Do you believe that it's power? Do you, do you think that way when you think, oh, I'm going to save the gospel or I'm going to share the gospel? Are you thinking, I'm about to share some potent stuff right here.

I'm about to share something powerful. I'm about to share something that if the Lord is drawing and saving, they can't resist. Like, he's going to save them.

Have you thought about it that way? That this is a, that all authority in heaven and earth has been given to the Lord, therefore he says, go. Therefore, go and make disciples.

And you make disciples by preaching them the gospel. They got to hear. Okay? Which goes to the last one I want to look at, Romans 10.13-17. Send and preach.

[11 : 55] For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

And how are they to preach unless they are sent as it is written? How beautiful are the feet of those who preach good news. But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord who has believed what he has heard from us.

So faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ. Faith comes from hearing.

This is another reason you should be confident when you're preaching the gospel. Why? Because you're hoping that they have faith, right?

There's no salvation apart from faith, right? Grace comes through faith. Grace through faith.

Ephesians 2, right? Well, so the only way they're going to get grace is if they get faith.

But how do they get faith? Through hearing. It says, faith comes from hearing and hearing through the word of Christ.

[12 : 56] The only way they're going to believe is if they hear. And so often we think, man, they're going to hear and then they're not going to believe. Well, it's like, wait, hold on. This just says the opposite here.

It says, faith comes from hearing. They need a hearing. They've got to hear. That's where the faith comes. How are they going to believe? Unless they hear. And how are they going to hear unless

someone preaches?

And how are they going to preach unless they're sent? And so here we are. Lord, send us. Send us. Send us to preach. God, send us to the lost.

Send us to the ones you're drawing. It's not our job to save them. It's our job to give them a hearing. And then God gives them faith in the hearing. That's the way he does it. Again, that's confidence building.

It's not my job to save them. It's not my job to convince them. It's my job to give them a hearing. And then God uses the hearing to give them faith.

[13:53] That's powerful. Okay? And so, I want us to be thinking about this a little bit more. As we start these three iterations of missional communities, it would be good for us to not just think of this individually, but to think of this corporately in each missional community and say, okay, how are we doing on the seeking and the saving?

How are we doing on the following and the fishing? How are we doing on the going and the making in light of his authority? And how are we doing on the sending and the preaching? Like, are we giving people a hearing?

Are we doing that? Are we sending people into specific places aimed at specific people? Are we praying for specific people in places? So, you know, one of the things I think that builds my faith is hearing stories.

Hearing stories of different people, how people were reached. And so I just wanted to share a few of those that I think have been encouraging to me over the last years. You know, I was just listening to a young man the other day who was talking about how one of his coworkers at work was preaching the gospel to him and then invited him to his house to kind of double down on the gospel. And the guy still wasn't totally coming along to this message of the gospel. and you know what he said to him? He said, hey, today is the day of salvation.

[15:16] And I just love how he said that to him. And guess what? The guy got saved. He got saved. He got baptized. There's great fruit coming from his life. This guy's life is transformed. But it took someone at work to preach the gospel to him and then to preach it again in his home and then to press it to him and say, hey, today is the day of salvation.

What are you waiting for? And the guy had no objection. He didn't have anything. He's just like, you're right. It is the day of salvation. And he got saved.

I think, man, that's so awesome. Are we taking those opportunities? My daughter was talking about how my daughter India was with her missional community the other day and they were in a park and they were playing spike ball together and some young guy walks by and one of the guys looks at him and he's like, spike ball?

He's like, oh yeah. And the dude just jumps in and starts playing spike ball with him. Well, and then right after that, you know, the guy's going back to his car. He's like, I may never see this guy again. And he goes and preaches the gospel to him, you know, before he leaves. And the guy's like, hey, can I go now? Wasn't hearing it. But you know what? Kudos to him.

[16:29] Kudos to him for preaching the gospel to him. I love that. Again, it's not our job to save people. And that guy didn't get saved. Right? But what did he do? He said, I may never see him again.

So he preached the gospel to him. You know, one of the, one of the, one of the greatest principles for evangelism in the last 14 years of my life has been this one phrase.

Introduce me to your friends. Introduce me to your friends. Some of you think, I don't even know how I'm going to get into evangelistic circumstances because I'm a housewife who's at home all the time with a bunch of, you know, kids who can't even barely speak English and have speech impediments and I'm supposed to go out and win a bunch of lost people.

Like, how is that going to happen? I'm not picking anybody's kids. I'm saying that's all. But you've got to get disillusioned. Like, I just talk to people who can barely talk all day and I'm supposed to do evangelism.

I mean, even with lost people. I'm with lost kids, I guess. My kids, I'm trying to win but they can barely talk. Right? And you think, or maybe I have a circumstance in life where I just don't, I just don't have any relationships with lost people.

[17:46] Maybe you're new to a particular area. Maybe you're, it's your job or whatever it may be. But one way that I've found to meet all kinds of lost people is that simple phrase.

Introduce me to your friends. Introduce me for your friend. I mean, there's a bunch of you who are in my life right now because I said to somebody else introduce me to your friends. Right?

That's how those things happen. I would never know Marianna if I wouldn't have asked someone else to introduce me to your friends. Right? These are, these are, that's a, so I think about that sometimes.

Sometimes when you meet people you just have to say, hey, you start getting a relationship to them and say, hey, introduce me to some of your friends. Who do you hang out with? Have them over. Do something with them. It's just a really, you know, low bar to do that but then all of a sudden what ends up happening is you end up, it's like introduce me to your friends and then, you know, oh, Marianna lives in a house with some friends and, you know, and then one of their friends was dating a guy who's not a believer.

That guy ends up getting saved. Why? Because I said, introduce me to your friends. That's how it started. I would have never met that guy if, when it said, introduce me to your friends.

[18 : 59] Right? And then as you keep doing that, all of a sudden it just keeps going out and out further and further and it's like, how do you know this person? Well, I know that person because I met this person and that person ended up, I met this person and then because of that person I ended up going up to their wedding and then at their wedding I met their friends at their wedding because I was at their wedding and I said, oh, it was your wedding.

Introduce me to your friends. They're all here, right? Introduce me to your family. They're here, right? And then you start meeting them and then they want to get together with you and then you end up getting together with them and it's some couple who's living together who's engaged but they're living together and they're professing to be Christians.

So I'm just like, and they're asking me to do their premarital counseling. I'm like, why don't you guys repent and stop living together first and we'll see and then we'll talk. And then what ends up happening? I didn't think anything was going to happen.

I got a call a month later that said they had moved out, got two separate apartments and they're like, we're ready. I'm like, okay. You know? But it all just started with introduce me to your friends and then it keeps going, right?

And then sometimes it's just through, I think so many times we underestimate the power of prayer too in this. Do we really believe that God wants to save lost people? Do we really believe that?

[20 : 09] I doubt it sometimes, right? I mean, I was thinking about this the other day. I was remembering sitting in a gathering, at a missional community gathering and it was one of those prayer requests where, hey, my co-worker's sister who lives in Colorado could use some prayer.

And I'm like, okay, it's kind of a, yeah, we could pray for that, you know? And I'm thinking, who is this person? And even, you know, that's kind of a, you know, my best friend's sister's brother's boyfriend's girlfriend is going with this guy who knows this girl who passed out at 31 flavor bus. You know, that whole thing, like this long thing, that I just catch her there with some of them. Yeah, you might have to. Um, ends up happening.

We pray for this, this person and then, like, I don't know how many years or how many months later it was, Gina's on a Sunday morning at church and meets the girl we were praying for and it was Amber.

You know, it's like, what are the chances of that? And he thought it was just a one-time thing, but there was something about, maybe it was because it was Ben Clinton who brought it up and it's just the way Ben is, but it's just like, yeah, we should pray for this and we're praying for some stranger we don't even know and then all of a sudden she's a beloved person in our life.

[21 : 24] Those kind of things happen, right? You never know when you're praying about things. I remember years ago, I heard about this family of brothers who were super wild and just kind of known for being wild and crazy and so I was like, I'm going to start praying for all these brothers so that I get to know them.

I've never met any of them. I didn't know them. I had no way of meeting them, but I was like, I want to get to know these people and I want to be in their life. So I just started praying. I said, Lord, bring me into contact with these brothers and there was like, what, three or four of them, I think, who lived here.

Every single one of them I got in contact with in the next couple months. One of their wives ended up living with us for a couple weeks because their marriage was on the rocks.

Another one of them, another one of the guys lived with us for over a year. I got to talk to the other guys. There was all kinds of opportunities for preaching the gospel, for bringing them in and I didn't even know these guys.

I had no way to get to know them, but I had this burden, I think it was from the Lord, to reach out to them and I just said, Lord, bring them to me. I want to get after these guys and it ended up happening.

[22 : 38] Even, you know, some of them lived with us. You know what I'm saying? God answers prayer. I think sometimes we forget and we don't want to pray audacious prayers or things that seem like long shots.

Why not? What are you praying for that seems impossible when it comes to the lost? And how often are you doing it? Is it just a flimsy little throw the prayer up there once in a while? Are you committed to pray for people that God is drawing or that God's putting on your heart and you just keep praying for them?

I think these things are important. And I think of different times when we've done different events when we did man camps over the years. and we met different guys. And all the times I got to meet different people just by putting ourselves out there and say, hey, we're going to teach on a particular topic for a period of time.

Or when we did a marriage conference once and different families we met through that who were in really rough spots. Or just opening up to people who were having rough times in their marriages and being able to talk to them through their marriages, how different that has happened.

How many impactful things. I think of my own son, Austin, who we adopted as an older man in his late 20s.

[23 : 51] Well, what happened is we just adopted him into our family. Okay? This guy was, he was lost in many ways and we just said, we're going to adopt him into our family. And I think of all the ways that we've just adopted people into our family and had people into our life.

how, you know, we've had different people just join us in homeschooling and doing homeschooling with our kids. Or we've had people just come over and eat at our house. We had people at one point in time, maybe not the best idea, but we gave out the code to our house and we'd wake up in the morning and someone would be sleeping on our couch and we didn't know they were there.

And it's just like, whoa, what's going on here? But those were, man, those are times when we would really reach out to people and love people. I remember one time we did a park night and one of my kids, who was really young at the time, asked some girl that we had never met before if she wanted to sleep over at our house.

That was Allie Casey. You know, it's like, never met her before. So like, these different things happen and you just never know. But it's when, again, my family was doing this together with us. It wasn't just us. We would pray together as a family for people. We'd pray, our kids and us would pray for people. Our kids would pray for people their age. You know, when we first started Bellicose 14 years ago, there was no kids my kids' age.

[25 : 13] Now my kids have tons of friends, have all kinds of, but I say that to you young cats, Max and Charlie, who are you praying for, man? Who are those young people you're praying for that are your age just saying, God, get them, save them, bring more young people, bring more friends for us.

Like, those are prayers we should be praying. Those are prayers we should be praying with our kids. We used to pray most nights with my kids. Lord, send more kids. Send kids my kids' age. Send my kids' future best friends.

Send them. You've got to be spirit-led too. I remember one time Gina was at some, was checking out some homeschool possibility of some woman teaching our kids science, and there was this young man there sitting cross-legged on the floor arguing with the teacher.

and then Gina really felt led by the spirit that I want to pursue this guy. found out that he supposedly tuned pianos, I guess, and so then had him over to tune a piano.

And then from there, she's like, Josh, you've got to meet this guy. You should invite him to man camp. It was Judah Powers, you know? It's like, I didn't know this guy. But I think, Gina, there was this burden for Judah at that time.

[26 : 28] And she was just like, I don't know what it is about this guy, but I'm just really, really led to, my heart is going out for him. You've got to, can you please talk to him? I'm like, yeah, yeah, I'll talk to him.

I'll talk to him. She was like, I'm young, you know? Those are the kind of things, you know? Is the spirit leading you towards people? Spirit might be leading you to ask someone to even move in with you.

And that could change, it could help change the trajectory of someone's life or where they're going. You know, we had that many, we did that many times with different people. Michael lived with us for many years. I remember early on, years ago, there was one guy we were going to have live with us and all his friends were like, there's no way he's going to live with you.

And it turns out, it's like, well, I'm just going to ask him. You never know. And it was Josh Wears and he ended up living with us. So, I mean, you just never know with these kind of things.

You never know what can happen with your neighbors. I remember when we moved into our neighborhood and we lived in Midtown, you know, we had this vision to reach people and so we're just like, we're going to have people over for dinner, we're going to have people over for barbecue. Every single one of my neighbors I asked to come over for dinner, they said no.

[27 : 37] I was like, what? This is going to be easy. He's like, have people over for dinner, talk to them about the gospel. They wouldn't come over. I was like, what the heck is with these people? This is weird.

It's free food. We're going to eat outside. It's not even intimidating, but no. No. And more than ever, people just don't do stuff together.

I just read an article the other day about how people, young people, spend 70% less time partying with people than they used to. 70%.

It's the amount of time people spend socially is down so drastically right now. It's like crazy when you look at the stats compared to even back to the 80s.

And Chris is like, it's awesome. People just aren't doing things socially with each other. So you got to keep inviting. You got to keep figuring out.

[28 : 31] So I thought this is going to be easy, right? We'll just move into my neighborhood. I'm just going to invite people over. And so we're just going to ask people over. And guess what? Everybody said no. It's like, oh, this is going to be a lot harder than I thought it was.

So we had to figure out something else. But every time I'd come outside and talk to my neighbors, they'd be talking about basketball every single time. So I'm like, hey, if I put up a basketball hoop and put up some lights, would you guys come over after your kids in bed and play?

And they had an enthusiastic, yes, of course we'll do that. I'm like, all right, let's start with basketball. So we started doing that. For two years, almost every week, we'd have people over to play basketball.

And the neighbors would come over. Next thing you know, we're getting to know the neighbors. Next thing you know, when they go out on vacation, they give us their keys. And we're taking care of their house and we're feeding their dog.

But if you know me, I don't like feeding dogs and I'm cleaning up dog crap in their house and my neighbors. Definitely not my first thing that I wanted to do. But, hey, I want to see, they're all lost.

[29 : 33] I want to see these people saved. But if I just would have gave up because they wouldn't come over for dinner, wouldn't have happened. You know, it's like, no, I'm on mission to these people.

We're going to, we want to see these people saved. And so it opened up all kinds of doors for preaching the gospel. Preaching the gospel at basketball. Preaching the gospel we're overhanging on their porch. Preaching the gospel on a private jet to Hawaii, I mean to Haiti, not Hawaii, on a private jet to Haiti to my neighbors who invited us on this trip.

How does that happen? I don't know. It just did. Because you open up the doors and you just keep preaching the gospel. You know, going to, I think of all the times I would go to Oddly Correct, you know, during those times.

I don't, I don't even drink coffee. And I'm, but that was a watering hole where a bunch of people were. I'd go there. The amount of times I would meet people there that I didn't know.

Finding watering holes where you can go and just meet people and look for opportunities to preach the gospel. People are frequenting certain places over and over again. You know, I had seven kids at one point in time in our house.

[30 : 44] So we went to Costco all the time, lived five minutes from there. There was one particular cashier who was always more open to us and was friendly with us and knew us by name and we knew her by name and we'd talk about each other's families.

And so no matter how long everybody else's lines was, we would always go to her line. And we would always talk to her. Eventually we had her over for dinner. You know, have you ever had a cashier over for dinner, your grocery clerk cashier for dinner?

Probably not likely unless you really keep going to that same one over and over again. And she came over for dinner. You never guessed what we talked about when she came over for dinner. The gospel. The gospel.

Of course we did. Of course we did. But it was over time and there's all kinds of ways we can do that. The sports our kids would play. You know, I think of the times when we would go to football games or wrestling tournaments and we would talk to the parents and we'd talk to the coaches. The opportunities that I got to preach to the coaches. I was just preaching to Judah's coaches at his wedding not too long ago.

[31 : 49] Again, another opportunity to preach the gospel. Think of hosting the end of the year party at our Airbnb house at the time and this Buddhist dad talking to me at my kitchen table about Buddha and I'm preaching the gospel to him.

You know, what were the chances of me getting a Buddhist dad sitting at my kitchen table in my house? Pretty low. Unless I'd gotten people's lives and said, hey, let's have the party at our house. Do you know what I'm saying? So it's like all these things happen and one thing leads to another and another leads to another. And so you might think, oh, there's not a whole lot of things going on right now.

I don't know what to, I don't know what to do as far as that goes. Well, we have to be strategic. We have to seek and save. We gotta be intentional.

We gotta be not giving up. We gotta keep after it. We gotta know the difference between individual mission and corporate mission. Okay? Every single one of us is a Christian that's gonna be on mission to specific people in our life.

[32 : 48] That's just being a Christian. That's like ground zero. Okay? You can't expect everyone in your life to be on mission with you. But there are gonna be times where it's gonna make sense to do that. And you need to look for those opportunities in a missional community.

Like, where are the people we can be on mission together? And maybe it's not all of us. Maybe it's just a few of us and the rest of us are praying. Okay? I'm on, over the years I've been on multiple threads of this in missional communities.

Right now I'm on a thread together with a bunch of people who are purposely doing evangelism often. And a lot of times I'm not the one doing the evangelism. But they're telling me when they're having opportunities to evangelize people.

And so I'm doing a really important part. You know what that is? I'm praying. I might not be with them locked arms and doing evangelism with them but I'm praying for them. It's just like when, you know, David's mighty men came back and they said, and they were sharing the spoil and they said, hey, these people who stayed with the stuff and the women and the children, they don't get the spoil.

He's like, no, no, no. Those who stay back and those who go both get in the spoil. Each part is important. And it's the same thing with evangelism. Some people are out there on the front lines and then the rest of us should be praying for them.

[34 : 00] Like Adam was saying, praying that their eyes would be open. Praying that their eyes would be open. That's an important part because if you preach and their eyes aren't open, they ain't going anywhere.

Right? They gotta have their eyes open. But it's important for us in our mission communities to say, okay, who are we on mission to? What are we already doing? Where are we already? Like take existing inventory of what's already going on in life.

Who are the people that are in your life? Is there any intersection with this? And if there's not, because there might not be, if there is, take advantage of it. Think of what you could do to that. And if there's not, pray.

Pray for something. Pray for things to come together. Pray for people to be on mission to together. And don't get discouraged if it takes time. Don't get discouraged if you have to wait on the Lord. Don't get discouraged if you have to keep praying and keep praying.

Pray for new places. Pray to be spirit led to specific people, friends and family, neighbors and neighborhoods, co-workers and workplaces. We're regularly going to the same restaurant, the same grocery store, same coffee shop, the same barber, same hairdresser, the same mechanic,

same chiropractor, same park.

[35 : 09] And you start saying, I remember at one point in time, a bunch of people went to the same barber together for only one reason, to reach that guy with the gus. You know, I've had multiple chiropractors that I've gone to and that other people have gone to and that we've all shared the gospel with the same guy.

Let's be on mission together, right? We can do this kind of stuff. Reaching out to specific people and then really getting specific strategies for mission.

Do you believe that this is possible? Do you believe that God wants to give you this? I think of Acts 13 too. It says, while they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, that phrase right there is just a phenomenal phrase, is it?

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, when was the last time you and your mission of the community were worshiping the Lord and fasting together for the purpose of mission?

We're just like, okay, we're just going to worship God, wait on the Lord and we're going to fast together and we're going to believe that the Holy Spirit is going to lead us. Do you believe that? It says, and the Holy Spirit said, set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work at which I've called.

[36 : 18] Some of us are thinking, man, I don't know where to go. I don't know who to reach out to. I don't know how we can be on mission as a missional community. May I suggest that perhaps you add a little worship and fasting in. Like we're going to have a night together.

We're just going to worship and fast together. Like we're just going to pray and wait on the Lord and see what he says, see how he leads. The Holy Spirit will lead you to seek and save those who are lost.

But you got to put yourself in a position to hear and we got to be listening. We can't just be sitting there going through the motions and mumbling a bunch of worship songs and not be thinking, the Holy Spirit wants to speak to us.

He wants to set apart people for his work and believe for that and encourage one another. Because some of you get discouraged on anything. I don't know if anybody is going to get saved. I don't know who to talk to.

I don't know how we're going to do this together as a missional community. And so there needs to be mutual encouragement like, no, believe. Trust God. When they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said.

[37 : 20] The Holy Spirit says things. Luke 10 verse 2. He said, The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest field.

I want to focus on part of that verse that we don't usually focus on. The name of the Lord in that verse. What is he called? Lord of the harvest. Isn't that an important thing to think of?

You're not just praying to the Lord. Right? Oh Lord, please save people. Oh Lord, give us people to reach out to. Oh Lord, you know, help us get on mission. Help this church, Christ church, to be an evangelistic church that gets in front of lost people and gives them a hearing of the gospel.

Right? You're not just praying to the Lord. You're praying to the Lord of the harvest. That's who he is. He's the Lord of the harvest. He owns the harvest. He's in charge of the harvest.

So you got direct access to the Lord of the harvest. We're saying, I want to harvest. You want to experience a harvest. You're praying for a harvest, but you're praying to the Lord of the harvest.

[38 : 31] The one who's in charge of it. The one who's doing the work. The one who's doing the saving. The Lord of the harvest. Do you think of that when you pray? God, you're the Lord of the harvest.

That's why I'm going to you. We want to see a harvest. You are the Lord of the harvest. You think of that when you pray. When you pray together as a people. When you're thinking about ways to reach out to people.

I really want to encourage missional communities to get specific ways you're going to reach out to lost people. And please, don't get discouraged if they don't work. I know, yes, the guys are trying to get a bunch of people together even this week for a little something.

And it wasn't a good showing of people. Keep at it. Keep at it. How many times did missionaries go into countries and they saw no converts for six to seven years?

Keep at it. Who are you praying to? He's the Lord of the harvest. He's the Lord of the harvest. Keep at it. Keep inviting. Keep doing. Keep eating with people. Keep doing meals.

[39 : 37] Set up things. Like, hey, we're going to do a regular night of the week where we just have open and we're just going to invite people. Try to make it room for lost people. Maybe for my neighbors. No falls coming up.

Oh, can't wait. Love that time of year, right? People are outside. People want to hang out. Nobody wants anything outside of right now. It's horrible out there. It's hot and muggy, but we're, it's right around the corner, right?

Football season started this last week. People are getting together, right? Listen, don't just think last minute. We need to get strategic. What are you going to do to get people in your life?

What are you going to do to get on mission to people? We're not, we're not just coming here to sing songs and have a nice time and enjoy one another and maybe have a good time with each other.

This isn't about us. This is about the Lord and the harvest.

We're here getting to know one another, growing closer to one another, being a family together so that we can be on mission. So we got to get after it. We can't just get comfortable with each other.

[40 : 37] We got to get after planning specific ways, spirit-led ways, waiting on the Lord ways where we can get into people's life, where we can get people in front of us who can get a hearing for the gospel.

That's going to involve all kinds of things. You know, the holidays are coming up. You're going to wait to plan that holiday party the day before? You're going to start thinking about it now. Like, what are we going to do for Halloween in our neighborhoods?

What are we going to do for Thanksgiving, Christmas? Are we going to have a Christmas party?

Are we going to watch some football games together? Are we going to do a New Year's party? Like, be thinking of that stuff now in your missional communities.

Have those conversations. And then begin praying about those things way ahead of time. So that you're in August and you're praying about a Christmas party. Why not?

Right? Lord, we want to see a harvest. We want to see people saved. And I think some of us, we could use a little bit more discipline and like, no, let's be more strategic in this.

[41 : 37] Let's be more planning in this. Let's be more focused on this. Let's be more intentional in this. Let's put more time and effort into this. I don't doubt anybody's desire and that there is effort, but I'm saying, like doubling down and saying, okay, we got these three little nimble missional communities.

Let's get on mission to some people. Let's figure out how we're going to do it. Let's make a plan and let's execute. And let's just trust. And if nothing happens, we just keep trusting God.

Just say, Lord, you're the Lord of the harvest. You're the Lord of the harvest. I'm going to keep giving people hearings. I'm going to keep making room for unbelievers to be in my life. I'm going to keep being hospitable and opening up my home and my heart and my schedule to people who are lost.

I'm going to keep doing this. I'm going to keep trying to open the doors to this. And I'm going to radically reorient my life around God's mission to lost people. I'm going to make time for it.

I'm going to make, I'm going to set aside time to pray for the, for the harvest on a regular basis. Do you do that? I'm going to do it with my brothers and sisters. Maybe you guys hang out with each other for some night and have dinner together before you leave.

[42 : 42] Hey, before you leave, can we just agree and pray right now for a harvest? Yeah, can we just take five minutes right now and just pray for a harvest? Thanks so much for coming over.

I love you. It's a great time. Let's pray for the harvest. You know what I'm saying? Doesn't that, you don't have to pray, you don't have to travail for four hours. You know? But ask.

You don't have because you don't ask. Right? And just looking for opportunities to just really jump in there. And then just keep doing over and over again. Praying for the gospel to be proclaimed and believed.

Building new and existing relationships with unbelievers. Preaching the gospel to strangers and those who are building relationships with. Exposing the people we're on mission to to the family of believers.

Introducing them to other believers. Getting other believers in their life. And then making disciples who make disciples. And then rinse, repeat, rinse, repeat, rinse, repeat, rinse, repeat, rinse, repeat. Keep doing it

over and over and over again.

[43 : 39] And if it ever starts to get stale or if it ever starts to get boring, that just means you're not being led by the Spirit. Maybe you need a fresh feeling of the Spirit. Maybe you need to get some fresh Spirit creativity of God just to speak to you.

Maybe it's time to forgo some meals and just pray and fast and say, Lord, what do you have for me? I want to get after it. Because only when life will soon be passed and only what's done for Christ will last.

I don't want to just coast to life. I don't want to waste my virility on just a bunch of things for me. I want to use the God-given passion that you've given me for the purposes of the kingdom and get after doing exciting exploits for God and believing that he's going to come through.

Which means I'm going to pray and fast for the mission. I'm going to pray for boldness. I'm going to pray for love. I'm going to pray for God's heart for the lost. And I want to report regularly on victories.

If there's any victories, please make sure you have an obligation to all of us. Tell us. Tell us. If something good happened, tell us. If an answer of prayer happened, tell us.

[44 : 47] If someone's coming over or you're getting together with someone who's lost, tell us so we can be praying. You should be regularly jumping on your missional community threads and saying, hey, so-and-so, pray for them.

They're coming over or I'm getting lunch or whatever. I'm doing this or that. We're going to get a drink or so-and-so's going to, we're going to meet up. Whatever it may be. And then when there's victories, tell people.

Tell people. Just the other day when I was hearing that testimony and my brother who just said to that one guy, today's the day of the salvation, and he's like, I got saved that day.

I was just, I was crying. I was like, yes! That's awesome! That's awesome! And they led two other people to the Lord at their place of work as well since then.

That's awesome! You know why I need to hear that? Because I have preached the gospel to a bunch of people in my workplaces over the years and I don't think I've ever seen one of my coworkers get saved.

[45 : 50] So you know what ends up happening? You start to think, do coworkers get saved? But then when one of your friends says, yeah, four coworkers got saved, you're like, coworkers get saved. It does happen. This is good.

I want to keep praying for this. I don't want to lose faith. I want to lose hope. I want to seek and save those who are lost. And then I think as we're doing that, keep reevaluating, keep thinking about it, but I'm believing in faith that starting this week with these three missional communities that God is launching us into the harvest field in a way that is going to cause us to reap a harvest.

That's what I'm believing for. And I'm asking you to believe with me for that. I'm asking you to pray with me for that. And to realize, too, that some of the, even the obstacles to familial bonding with one another will be taken care of when we get on mission together.

We'll be taken care of when we get on mission together. Some of the greatest ways to bond with people is to do very difficult, adventurous things together. That's mission. Okay? That's us.

When you watch all the old war movies, you have people who are totally different than each other becoming really close friends. Why? Because of the mission. Because of the mission. They accomplish something bigger than themselves together.

[47 : 02] And when you accomplish seeing the kingdom of God come on earth as it is in heaven together with a group of people, it binds you together like a family, like no other thing can. And that's an important thing to remember.

Lastly, in closing, this is not optional. Mission is not optional for us. We've got to be on mission. We've got to be on specific mission to specific people and places.

And I'm not asking you to rush that. I'm not asking you to try to conjure anything up. But you don't have to. He's the Lord of the harvest. He's the Lord of the harvest. He's going to give us stuff. He's going to speak to us.

He's going to, I mean, even be asked, Lord, speak to us in dreams. Like give us people that we see in our dreams that all of a sudden we like run into. Like, whoa. You know, give us specific strategic ways to get in people's lives.

Like that's how any missionary would think, right? Like I said at the beginning, that Spurgeon quote, every Christian is either a missionary or imposter. We got to think like a missionary. Think, all right, I'm here.

[48 : 01] I'm in this part of town. How am I going to get in front of lost people to give them a hearing for the gospel? Amen? Amen? Let's stand.