

We Have a Mission

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Text: *John 17*

In 1976 there was a man who attempted to hijack an airplane. The man stood up and grabbed the stewardess around the throat and put a gun on her head. *“Take this plane to Detroit!”* The stewardess said, *“But sir, we are going to Detroit.”* He said, *“O really, I’m sorry.”* Then he sat down.

Clearly this man had no idea where he was going. Sadly, there are many people who are like that hijacker **who had no clue where he was going**. There are so many people and sadly including Christians who have **no vision, no mission, and no purpose**. And when we live that way, life is reduced to mere existence and insignificance.

But our Lord knows what He came to do

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

John 10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

John 3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was sent and came into the world to seek and to save the lost and to give His life a ransom for many. That was His mission.

He was **determined** to do what He was sent to do. He was **resolved** to complete and to finish it. While He was nailed to the cross **He was able to say**, *“It is finished.”*

Today I want to talk about our mission as individuals and as a church family. **We need to know who we are and why we are here on earth**. So at the end of our lives we would be able to say with Paul...

2 Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

I - Our Mission

What is our mission?

God's plan for the church is not just to gather every Sunday and sing, sing, sing. His plan for the church is not just to sit on the pew, listen to preaching, and listen to more preaching, and listen to endless preaching and get blessed.

Nor is His plan for us is not to withdraw from society and live like monks and hermits in caves or convents monasteries.

So what is God's plan for the Church?

Our Lord tells us what our mission is in this world as Christians and as church family

18: As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

As God the Father has sent His Son with a mission, so the Son is sending us. God has given us a mission.

To learn more about His plan for the church let's listen to the Lord's Prayer....

II - The Lord's Prayer

9: I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

20: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Christ on the last night before He went to the cross we read Christ praying to the Father. In His prayer **He prayed for the disciples and all the believers** in the world.

But He said that **He did not pray for the world.** Doesn't that bother you that He would say, *I pray not for the world.* Doesn't our Lord care for the world?

Before we answer that question, let's look at what the Lord prayed for, for His disciples and all believers in the world.

What did He pray for the disciples and all the believers in the world?

15: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16: They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

The Lord's Prayer for the believers is - do not take the believers from the world. **His prayer was consistent with the mission He has for us.**

18: As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

Instead of removing us or taking us out of the world our Lord said, He is sending Christians into the world. **His plan is not for us to withdraw from the world but to go into the world.**

God's plan for the church is for the church **to go into the world** and **to make a difference.**

God's plan for the Christians is to go into the world as Christ went into the world.

John 20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

God is sending us into the world with a mission and a message.

But as we are in the world and as He sends us, He prayed for us that we would be protected from the evil one.

III - A Challenging Mission

1. The world sits in darkness

Matthew 10:16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, harmless as doves.

It is a challenging mission because the whole world is full of wolves. The whole world sits in darkness. He is sending us into the darkness. He is sending us into the dark world to be lights and to be salt.

Our mission on earth is to be in this world and not to become like the world. God wants us to be in the world, but not to love the world. He wants us to love the people in the world, but at the same time not to be like the world, not to fall in love with the things and ways of the world.

1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16: For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

2. The world is full of trouble

Another reason why it is a challenging mission is because the world is full of trouble.

The Lord reminds us in ...

John 16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

As we are carrying out our mission in this world we will encounter tribulation and persecution and opposition.

15: I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. 16: They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

How are we going to survive the world full of darkness, trouble and persecution? How can we faithfully fulfill God's mission for us and not be overcome by the evil one?

How can we be engaged in our culture and community and at the same time not so infatuated by the world and not to be tempted nor be overcome by the world?

IV - Our Protection

1. We must be sanctified

14: I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17: Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

19: And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

If we are going into the world and be protected from the evil one there must be sanctification through the Word of God. Sanctification is the process whereby God is transforming us and conforming us into His image. Making us the person we were meant to be.

We cannot shine in the darkness for Jesus if we are not surrounded and saturated by the truth of God. We need to be sanctified through the truth so that we could be protected from the evil one while we are in the dark world.

God's plan is not a plan of isolation, but insulation. God is not interested in taking us out of the world and isolating us from the ungodly influences. He is not interested in putting us in a monastery somewhere to keep us untainted by the world. His plan is not a plan of isolation, but insulation. Jesus was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners (Hebrews 7:26), yet He was "a friend of publicans (tax collectors) and sinners." (Luke 7:34)

*17: Sanctify them through thy truth: **thy word is truth.***

This reveals the importance of daily Bible reading and study, attending all church services and the importance of conforming our lives to the entire Word of God.

Scripture memory and meditation is a must if you want to insulate yourself from the world.

Psalm 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Memorizing and meditating on God's Word is key in keeping our hearts insulated against the world.

2. We must be fortified

We must not only abide in His Words, we must also abide in Christ and in His love. **Stay in love with Christ.**

*25: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. 26: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: **that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.***

We must stay in love with Christ.

Who is going to survive? The one who abides in His word and abides in Christ and in His love is the one who is going to endure.

*Jude 21 **Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life.***

Stay in love with Jesus and you will not fall in love with the things and ways of this world.

3. We must be unified

*11: And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, **that they may be one, as we are.***

*21: **That they all may be one;** as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, **that they also may be one in us:** that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22: And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; **that they may be one, even as we are one:** 23: **I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;** and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

Strive for unity

Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3: Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

You and I cannot do this alone. We need a network and community of believers.

V - A Bothersome Phrase

Now let's go back to prayer of Jesus that is bothersome.

*9: I pray for them: **I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.***

That is a bothersome phrase. Doesn't our Lord care for the world? Of course the Lord cares about the world. Read *John 3:16*.

Our Lord cares for the world. That is why He is sending us into the world. **His plan was not to take us out of the world because He cares for the world.** His wants us believers to be sanctified, fortified and unified so that as we go into the world, **the world might believe through us.**

Our Lord was primarily concerned about all the believers to be sanctified, fortified and unified so that the world could be won for Him. It is for the world's sake that Christ is sending us Christians into the world, into darkness. It is for the world's sake that Christ prayed that we would be sanctified, and fortified, and unified.

*21: That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.***

*22: And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; **and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.***

The Invitation

God has a mission. Christ had a mission when He was on earth. God is still at work. God is doing a work on earth. And the mission has not changed and it will not change as long as the world exists. The exciting part is God is inviting us and be part of this mission. Would you respond to the invitation? To do nothing is to reject the invitation!