

coMISSION Review

When considering our purpose as a community of God, it is crucial to begin our investigation with what God has said. We must approach our purpose from the presupposition of God and His Word over and above us as His creation.

The “MISSION” Of coMISSION

There must come a point in time our relationship to God when we move from the question, “What should we be doing?” to “What is HE doing and how can we align with HIM?”. One assumes mankind as authority and the other assumes God to be in authority over mankind. These two viewpoints are in opposition to each other, one leading to a humanistic purpose for life and the other leading to God’s purpose for life. If we desire to pursue God’s purpose for our lives, then we must choose to embrace the viewpoint of God as the authority over us.

In Genesis 1:26-27 we read of God’s initial purpose for mankind to create them in His image in order that mankind might reflect that image throughout the world as they multiplied and ruled over creation. As we read the end of the Bible we find echoing words that closely parallel and actually connect the beginning to the end. In Chapter 22 of the book of Revelation, we read that God’s restoration process will culminate in mankind living on the new earth, in God’s presence, reigning with Him over His creation as He originally intended. In summary, this was, is and will be the “MISSION” of God.

The “co” Of coMISSION

From the beginning of the Biblical narrative, we are introduced to the reality that God invites mankind to participate in His Mission. Man’s role is established by God. This is why it is called a coMISSION. In the book of Genesis, chapter 12, we are introduced to a key biblical character named Abraham who God selected as the patriarch of a group of people that He would use to co-labor with Him in restoring mankind to their original intended purpose. The prophet Zechariah affirms this purpose for Israel when he wrote that the nations would come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord. This plan of God to reach the world through Israel would continue to fill the pages of the entire Old Testament until the arrival of Jesus Himself.

In the New Testament, however, Jesus introduces a new “covenant” or plan with mankind that would change from exclusively using Israel and would include any person who believes in the gospel. We see the same mission, but now a much larger missionary force.

In His final words to his disciples, Jesus provides for us the goal of the mission of God, which is quite simple: make disciples of all people. This idea of making disciples is the process of restoring fallen image bearers of God (all people - born in sin) to their original intended purpose. This original intended purpose was outlined in the Garden of Eden where God created mankind to be in relationship and friendship with Him (security) as they embraced meaningful work for Him in ruling the earth and filling it with His goodness and life (purpose).

Not only did Jesus outline a goal, but He also explained the process that we must follow as we embrace His mission: go, baptize, teach. The mission of God is always to be lived out in a going posture; one that does not sit and wait but rather presses into the lost world with the love of Jesus because we have what they need and they don't even know it.

The mission of God is meant to be a baptism of lost image bearers into the life and love of Jesus. It is an immersion of people into something that they are completely without, but desperately need, deep love relationships with Him and others. Jesus spoke to this in John 17:20-21, when He said that our love for each other should be lived out in and among the lost in order that their immersion in it would convince them of the authenticity of who He is and what He has done.

The mission of God also includes teaching, which informs lost image bearers of the truth of God's Word in relationship to them. Without the truth of Jesus to confront their faulty beliefs, it is impossible for them to be restored. That is why we are not only to immerse people in the living Word (Jesus), but we are also called to teach the theology of love from the written Word (Jesus/Bible).

The mission of God is also motivated by Jesus' promise to be with us always as we embrace His mission. He promised that He would live within us as we pursue His mission in our present circumstance and that He would do this until He returned. This promise of Jesus gives perspective to us as we pursue mission today. He will go through it with us and it will all be worth it in light of eternity with Him.