

Beyond Sunday: Experiencing God's Design for the Church

The Church is Missional

Introduction: God is a sending God. Do a deep search of the word "sent" throughout the Bible and you would find that the word "sent" sums up God's redemptive and creative work in rescuing and renewing creation back to Himself.

The "sent" concept is rooted in the *Missio Dei* (Latin, "the sending of God"). In 1934, Karl Hartenstein, a German missiologist, coined the phrase in response to Karl Barth and his emphasis on *Actio Dei* ("the action of God"). In their view, mission comes from God. The Triune God is the primary acting agent in the world and within the church.

According to Lesslie Newbigin and Jesus' statements in the Gospel according to John, every Christian has been sent by Jesus with the gospel together in community to those in the surrounding culture for the sake of the King and His kingdom: "The Church is sent into the world to continue that which he came to do, in the power of the same Spirit, reconciling people to God," writes Newbigin. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you" (John 20:21).

Thomas Hale in his work, *On Being a Missionary*, writes, "No one can say: 'Since I'm not called to be a missionary, I do not have to evangelize my friends and neighbors.' There is no difference, in spiritual terms, between a missionary witnessing in his home town and a missionary witnessing in Katmandu, Nepal. We are all called to go—even if it is only to the next room, or the next block."

The Big Picture: God is a sending God. As such we are a sent people! Understanding this central truth to how God designed the church is fundamental to engaging the world well in the 21st Century.

Discussion:

Share:

- Describe a time when your parents, spouse or boss sent you out to accomplish some task or errand. Did you accomplish that task? Did it go smoothly? Did you feel confused about the instruction? Elaborate on your thinking.

Discuss:

Sermon Review:

- Review the sermon together using the website or the app. Write down any questions or thoughts that stand out to you as you review the sermon together. Discuss them as a group.
- "God's church doesn't have a mission in the world. God's mission in the world has a church." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why?

- Respond to Pastor Jeremy’s statement: “Because the Holy Spirit is the Sent One, my identity is sent-witness.”
- How do you understand, “Living ‘Sent’ means participating with God and with people.”?
- Pastor Jeremy said that “living sent means relating with people in the context in which we meet them.” What does that mean to you?
- Respond to this statement: “Witnessing to Jesus always means telling the truth about Jesus.”
- Do you believe that you can only witness to Jesus if you have experienced Jesus? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to witness to other Jesus-followers? How is this different to witnessing to not yet Jesus-believers?

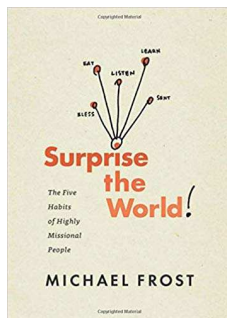
Unsettled or Uncertain:

- What questions, concerns or doubts do you still have as this discussion wraps up?

Now That You Know:

Jesus organizes the church around a deep intentionality of honoring God by serving each other.

How will you live more into Jesus’ expectation to be a serving-follower with other Christians? Write out one sentence that describes your intended attitude or action in response to God’s truth.



Further Exploration on this Topic:

Surprise the World: The Five Habits of Highly Missional People by Michael Frost

From the Publisher: Christianity is a surprising religion. It has changed the world in remarkable ways throughout history simply through Christians living out their faith. More recently, we’ve become afraid of a habituated Christianity, thinking that routines will rob our faith of its vitality. The net effect is that we’ve replaced the habits that surprise the world with habits that mimic the world—and both we and

the world suffer for it.

Integrating the five habits in the BELLS model—Bless others, Eat together, Listen to the Spirit, Learn Christ, and understand yourself as Sent by God into others’ lives—will help you spread the gospel organically, graciously, and surprisingly.

Link: <https://www.amazon.com/Surprise-World-Habits-Highly-Missional/dp/1631465163>