

COMMISSIONED

THE ART OF LIVING OUT THE
WORDS, WAYS, & MISSION OF JESUS

8.2 Partnering in the Mission of Jesus

Living on Redemptive Edge

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Lesslie Newbigin once said, “I think the deepest motive for mission is simply the desire to be with Jesus where he is, on the frontier between the reign of God and the usurped dominion of the devil.”

“On the frontier between the reign of God and the dominion of the devil.”

As followers of Jesus, we exist on this redemptive edge.

Hello, my name is Avery. As we continue in our study of the partnering in the mission of Jesus, I want to do a deeper dive into the context of missions. We’ve heard about the need to operate contextually, the pursuit of shalom with God, self, others, and creation, and the redemptive solutions made possible by dreaming God sized dreams. Today I want to focus on where missions calls us.

In Luke 4 Jesus casts a vision for his ministry. He returns to the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth, and reads the following, also stated in Isaiah:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

One of the challenges of church in modern culture is that we can attend church programs and never get to the core of Jesus’ ministry. It is possible to “do church” and never actually embody what Jesus was in the gospels. To actually get there, we must go to the Redemptive Edge, the

place where the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of hell are fighting it out in the human heart.

In Luke, Jesus is describing his ministry, a ministry focused on bringing hope to those who are often most hopeless. Jesus is proclaiming light and healing, not to the privileged, but to the impoverished, to the pained. As Jesus says in Mark 2:7 “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Jesus’ ministry and life existed on that redemptive edge. It was those marginalized that most recognized the need to be included, those sick who most understood that they needed healing.

I like that phrase, Redemptive Edge - cause that's where you'll find disciples of Jesus most often - in the neighborhood of chaos - the places where humanity is most at risk, most in need of restoration. With a redemptive edge, we believe God reigns and we forever mature in our diligent seeking of His moving, His saving.

That redemptive edge, that tension between the peace of God and the poverty in the world is where the missional church operates, where a disciple of Jesus will continue to be drawn to.

This is the bedrock, the core of the good news of Jesus. And we’re called to partner in the mission of Jesus, every day.

A healthy missional community follows Jesus to the redemptive edge, the place where light confronts darkness. We are called to be people of love; mission exists because love draws us in. Heaven cheers us on as we are sent, like Jesus, to the redemptive edge, the place where light confronts darkness. This is the beautiful shape of the biblical narrative.

When I think of living on the redemptive edge I think of Justice+Equality, an organization founded by Pastor Devin Turner, to reduce, prevent, and ultimately end gun violence in our city. Each year Justice+Equality hosts the Peace of Art DC festival, where youth living in DC neighborhoods most affected by gun violence will have the chance to showcase their artwork- music, painting, dancing, spoken word, and other art forms. These youth will have the chance to take their art to the next level through a weekly Peace of Art DC mentorship program, where they'll learn directly from industry experts and be equipped with life and leadership skills. Youth are also given an opportunity to not only grow in their skills as artists, but also to become disciples of peacemaking in the ways of Jesus, so they can go back to their communities as ambassadors of peace.

This is living on the redemptive edge. Following Jesus to places of violence and conflict and providing a pathway towards peace.

As peacemakers we exist on the redemptive edge and in doing so - we ACT - advocate with the poor and oppressed, care for the sick and sorrowful and seek to transform through reconciliation with God and others.

In Acts 1:8 we are called to live by God's spirit on this redemption edge: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Did you catch it? Jesus specifically named Samaria. We are called to Samaria.

Samaria was where nobody wanted to go. And yet it was in Samaria that Jesus met the woman at the well, a woman scorned by society for both her actions and position. She was ostracized by her community, and marginalized in Jewish culture of the day. And yet Jesus chose to reveal himself to her, possibly before anyone else. Jesus moved towards her, in her sin and suffering. That is the Samaria, the redemptive edge we are called to.

We are empowered to live missionally wherever we are. However, there is an aspect of our calling as believers that also disrupts and displaces complacency. It is the both and of the gospel, we live missionally in our jobs, neighborhoods, families, but we also have an intentional sideline towards where the hope of the gospel might be most needed. We are encouraged to go to the ends of the earth, to the Samarias of our world, to follow Jesus to this redemptive edge. It is in this both and of living on mission every day that we live out the words, ways, and mission of Jesus.