

COMMISSIONED

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

7.2 Partnering in the Mission of Jesus

Pursuing Shalom

*David Schmidgall, Dream Co, Director of Mission and Impact
National Community Church*

We're continuing to explore our discipleship frame - what deeply formed, lifelong learning communities look like.

I'm going to walk us through another practice WITHIN partnering in the mission of Jesus – In this session I'm going to frame out an ESSENTIAL practice of partnering in the mission of Jesus and that is PURSUING SHALOM.

Couple caveats as you're reading or listening:

- I'm learning more and more and more - Discipleship is a state of being. Discipleship is how we live; not just the decisions we make, not just the things we believe, but a state of being.
- Because it's a WAY of BEING, we're not talking "tips and tricks" or jamming our minds full of information. You get all that every day. I want to invite you to see this more as a meditation, or something to reflect on not as what we DO but as a way of life.
- Third - this is a moment – I'll call it a season – that doesn't come around very often – where larger cultural forces have drawn us to a fundamental reshaping of our lives – you know them – I've been pastoring 17 years and studied movements – seasons and cycles of what produces deep change - throughout history – and I DO believe we're in a reformation, a re-formation of what it means to live a deeply formed life.

I speak as one of many who are seeking:

- How do we live whole in a hollowed-out moment?
- What are the spiritual rhythms and practices that are generative in a culture of comparison and competition?
- How do we explore soul space when we're all so stuck in our minds?
- What does living on mission FROM Jesus look like in our cultural moment?

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We are not rearranging the furniture – giving you tips on living your best life now – we’re reassembling the foundations and asking hard, important, beautiful questions.

So let’s back up and build from:

As disciples of Jesus who are lifelong learning to partner/join/integrate within His mission, Pastor Heather asked “how do we contextualize this call within our present world?”

That’s why the simplest question I ask almost everywhere, wherever I go whether it’s my neighborhood, workplace, overseas and with a partner is “what does the good news look like here?”

Cause the mission of Jesus doesn’t change, but the context does.

So when I ask that - I’m looking for: **good first.**

What’s beautiful, good, true, bears the image of God that needs to be named and acknowledged?

Look for the good and name that first.

I begin with beauty of communities and of people – even those who disagree with me or even spew hate.

Someone just recently who has been aggressive towards me and often angry and hurt said “you know, you’re a good man.” I couldn’t believe it. And I realized when I heard that how much the voices of “you’re not a good man” was within my heart. The power of our words to recognize goodness is POWER.

And we saw that when Paul went to Athens in Acts 17 he stood up and said “I see that you are very religious.”

He’s naming goodness first.

Too often I consider God’s absence instead of assuming His presence in others. We are learning to become Little Christ’s and seeing Christ in others.

We see goodness and beauty FIRST – what does the good news look like wherever I am?

Next, we pursue shalom

In every layer of life, we pursue peace. This should inform our work, our home, and our neighborhood.

We saw Jesus’ good news of making things right for eternity (now and forever) is to the poor.

What do we mean by that?

Peace/Shalom – wholeness/integration/unity/connection with God, self, others and creation

The Opposite? Poverty, Exploitation, Violence, Oppression –with God, self, others and creation.

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In other words, the Shalom/peace of God through Jesus – remember when he said what to the storm? Peace/Shalom.

Remember in John after the resurrection the first words Jesus said to the disciples? Peace be with you. As the Father is sending me. When Jesus is sending out the disciples to heal “disease” – he says “offer your peace to a home.”

Jesus model for practicing resurrection and kingdom is going to the “person of peace” in communities. This has ALWAYS informed my seeking shalom is looking for people of Peace as kingdom collaborators.

So partners in the mission of Jesus is a lifestyle of attentiveness towards hurting, dis-eased, impoverished, exploited in the life of my neighbor, our community, our city, the partners we join around the world.

The journey of discipleship is a journey of pursuing shalom.

My wife and I purchased a home many years ago – it was a former house church many years ago and we knew this would be called the Peace House – we have an olive branch in the center of our home and pray every day this would be a house of peace where the front porch light is always on and any wayward traveler will be welcomed – it’s been amazing to see who God brings to our door – from the children in our neighborhood looking for a meal, to friends experiencing homelessness that need an emergency space to rest, to refugee families that are looking for respite and a place to dance and enjoy life giving conversation. We created a listening room where we practice listening with God together and finding God’s shalom to then offer others in our world.

For so many of you, you create spaces of tremendous hospitality in your home. Hospitality is a spiritual practice, a missional heart of expressing love towards others.
A spacious space for others.

The quality of our presence is the first step in pursuing shalom.

So this living life FROM the peace of Christ is to discern the poverty (With God, self, others and creation) in others and join them at that point of need.

Lori Parkerson was praying over a Rectory across the street from where she lived, believing God had placed in her heart the need to heal di-ease in the DMV through restful space.

Lindsay Appiah, who God has placed in important role of addressing youth violence in our city, were praying for how God would like to assign them – Lindsay and Lori pitched this to a small community of prayer-partners and got a rectory in - and made it this STUNNING space and call it "selah house".

As disciples, Partnering in the mission of Jesus each day is a contextual process that is formed by “what does the good news look like here?”

Passionate about the 19% rise in gun violence/homicide in DMV in last 2 years, He believes its the call of the missional Church to name this as a concern, and seek to address this through what he calls "Peace of Art".

Peace of Art DC is an artistic leadership program which is exclusively offered to middle and high school students that live in neighborhoods that are traumatized by gun violence in Washington, DC. They offer leadership skills (restorative justice techniques, conflict resolution skills, and ways to make wise friendship choices) and life skills (financial literacy, post-secondary education planning, and entrepreneurship training).

Peace of Art DC is a safe place for our city's youth where they can avoid gun violence and learn how to help others do the same.

As we do life with others, we offer a lifestyle of Shalom. We pursue shalom.

Which leads us to be attentive to Kingdom presence and solutions to the most individual and collective problems – a culture of dreaming with God, God-sized dreams. That's next.