

# DEMONSTRATE: TRAINING GUIDE

## *Abiding Practices for Missional Communities*

*Demonstrate: Regularly and eagerly pursuing and serving the marginalized, poor, and fatherless to display the great mercy and kindness of our Heavenly Father and his plan to redeem his creation.*

### WHY WE DEMONSTRATE

The Demonstrating God's kindness to the world around us, like most other commands from God, actually starts in the Garden. Man and woman were created to subdue – or serve – the world which God had given them to inhabit. They were to serve one another, the animals, and the ground they worked in service to the God that breathed life into their lungs. Their act of service was a demonstration of their relationship with God and his kindness toward his creation.

The reverse was true at the Fall. When Adam and Eve sinned, they demonstrated a deceptive self-dependence in choosing to “be like God, knowing good and evil.” They turned their backs on God and their relationship was severed. Their desire to be made great caused them, and ultimately all of their offspring, to be crushed under the weight of sin. But praise be to God a snake-crushing King would come to free his people from the weight of their sin. And how would he accomplish this? Service.

[Mark 10:42-45](#) says,

42 And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

This is how Jesus brings the kingdom of heaven to earth, and this picture was also not just a one-time event. For those of us in Christ Jesus, this heart also becomes our heart. Paul summarizes the heart of Jesus in [Philippians 2:3-7](#) like this:

3 Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. 4 Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

The Twelve Disciples go from power-hungry seekers to servant-hearted followers in only three years of living with Jesus. John says that we know God's love abides in us when we lay down our goods for those in need ([1 John 3:16-18](#)). James says that pure and undefiled religion looks like visiting orphans and widows in their affliction ([James 1:27](#)). Peter says that we are to serve with all our strength knowing our goal is to glorify God through Jesus Christ ([1 Peter 4:10-11](#)).

However, demonstrating the kindness of God doesn't begin with the New Testament. In [Deuteronomy 10:17-19](#), we hear of God's heart to “execute justice for the fatherless and the widow, and love the sojourner, giving him food and clothing. Love the sojourner, therefore, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.” We cannot miss this: because of the redemption from their sojourning in Egypt, God called his people to welcome, feed, and clothe the sojourner dwelling in their midst.

This is the life God called the people of Israel to through the commandments given to Moses. Though they ultimately failed, Jesus perfectly lived a life of displaying the mercy of God to the broken world around him. Therefore, it's not up to you and me to fulfill this perfectly. And yet, this is our new life in Christ Jesus knowing that whatever we do to serve the least of these, we do it unto our King.

## DEMONSTRATE IN COMMUNITY

One of the best ways to practice abiding in community is through the practice of demonstrating. Logistically speaking, we can be exposed to and engage in demonstrating the good news of the gospel more easily in community. Let's take a look at each of the three Missional Community rhythms to see how you can demonstrate the gospel together as a family of servant missionaries.

### Family Gatherings

An easy way to imitate the example of Jesus, but also one that you probably haven't thought of before, is to follow his command in John 13 to wash each other's feet. Though it might not directly correlate with our time in history, this is still a valid gift of service that we can give to one another. After spending the night praying together over the needs of the group, make space for people to wash one another's feet during a Family Gathering. To help contextualize this practice to the 21st century, you might consider washing one another's hands instead. Another easy option is for your Missional Community to walk around your neighborhood and simply ask neighbors if they need help with anything. Let them know you just want to get to know the neighborhood and how you can serve and bless the people who live there. You might end up raking a neighbor's leaves, bringing a meal to a family walking through grief, or helping an elderly person with a simple house project. Let this act of service serve as a bridge to share the good news inspiring you to ask in the first place.

### DNA Groups

One very low-hanging fruit, yet deeply impactful way that you can demonstrate God's love is by freeing up someone else to meet with their DNA Group. Husbands, take care of the kids for the night as Mom sits with her sisters. Empty nesters and young professionals, you can do the same thing for some parents in your group as you help out with the kids so that they can invest deeply into relationships with other men and women in their lives.

It may be difficult to coordinate the schedules of everyone in your Missional Community to rally together and serve at Lincoln Village or Manna House, but if you break the group down into DNA groups you're much more likely to find a way to serve as a smaller group of three-five people. Whatever acts of service you would like to demonstrate, just grab a few others to go with you.

### Neighborhoods to Nations

The neighborhoods to nations is the most obvious rhythm for us to demonstrate the good news of the gospel. In fact, that's what it's entirely about! We have partnered with 13 local ministries that all focus on sharing the gospel as they demonstrate the works of Christ to our city. There is no bait-and-switch, surprise factor, or facade; these ministries are up front about who compels them to go. You don't have to feel that you need to re-create the wheel and dream up some creative way to serve. Instead, just sit down with your Missional Community and ask one another, "what are we passionate about?" and, "where is God already working in our city?" Your answers to these questions might not line up with what one of our [Local Partners](#) is already doing, but it's very likely that it will.

More questions to ask who and where to serve:

- What passions are represented in the group?
- Where are people already serving?
- What are the challenges that the people are affected by?
- How can your Missional Community help meet those needs?
- How is God's providence already working there? How can you join in on the efforts to advance the kingdom there?
- Lastly, use the [Missional Community Common Mission Worksheet](#) to help your group discover the ways in which you can demonstrate the gospel through serving together.
  - Find it here: [summitcrossing.org](http://summitcrossing.org) > Resources > Training > Abiding Practices > Demonstrate

Using these questions and resources serve as a powerful tool to help our groups regularly and eagerly pursue and serve the marginalized, poor, and fatherless to display the great mercy of the Father.

## **SAMPLE COMMITMENT**

Below is a sample commitment that you can use as an example for planning your time together.

## **DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT**

Missional Community Leaders: The Hills and McGraws

Date of Commitment: July 2023

Date to Reevaluate Commitment: September 2024

### **Commitment**

Our Missional Community is committed to the majority of our members spending at least one week per month demonstrating the love of Christ to our community over the next quarter. From there, we will reevaluate our commitment and pray through where God has called us to serve.

### **Family Gatherings**

We will spend 30 minutes in prayer to start our Family Gathering before stopping to go through the [Missional Community Common Mission Worksheet](#). We will then pray over who will go and serve, who will take the lead, and who will need to support through prayer or giving as they cannot make it in person.

### **DNA Groups**

Our DNA Groups will close their time together praying for the Local Partner and discussing how they saw Christ working as they served there. They will also challenge one another to be present at the upcoming serving opportunity, and to find more opportunities to engage with the chosen ministry.

### **Neighborhoods To Nations**

On the fourth week of the month our group will join together to serve with the Local Partner to which the Holy Spirit has led us. We will commit to serving there for three months. We will then reevaluate how it's going. If led to continue there, we will commit to this as an equally important rhythm of our Missional Community. We will serve them as often as we can and encourage one another as the cares of the world seek to choke out our desire to give of ourselves in service to our neighbors.

### **Conclusion**

Thank you so much for taking the time to read through this document and to engage with the Abiding Practice of Demonstrate. Our Missional Community Staff Team is available to answer any questions and help you take your next steps toward living out this practice. Simply email us at [mc@summitcrossing.org](mailto:mc@summitcrossing.org). Demonstrating the heart of Jesus Christ is a heart that has been given to us in our new life with him. We seek only to do what we saw our Savior do as he came to this earth, lowered himself to our place, took on our lives, and served us so that we might ultimately rest in him. Now from that place of rest, get to work!

## **DEMONSTRATE RESOURCES**

We would encourage you to engage with the following resources as you discuss how to implement the Abiding Practice of Demonstrate.

### **Recommended Sermons**

[Demonstrate - Life in the Vine: Practices for Abiding in Jesus](#) - Jamey Nettles

[Doing Justice & Mercy](#) - Tim Keller

### **Recommended Books**

[A Field Guide for Everyday Mission](#) - Ben Connelly & Bob Roberts Jr.

[The Gospel Comes With a House Key](#) - Rosaria Butterfield

[Life Together](#) - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### **Recommended Digital Resources**

[Summit Crossing Local & Global Partner Information Sheet](#) - PDF

[Why All Christians Must Seek Public Justice](#) - K. Edward Copeland (TGC Article)

[Why Serving the Common Good Isn't Enough](#) - Jeff Haanen (TGC Article)

**DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT**

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Family Gatherings:

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DNA Groups:

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Neighborhoods To Nations:

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