



# gracefellowship

Follow The Leader  
September 13, 2020  
Developing Life Rhythms: Mission

## :: John 17:4-8

Series recap: The rhythms we keep in life are important for us to be able to maintain a healthy soul and a healthy balance of life and faith. Jesus walked perfectly in step with God the Father and was sustained through three primary life rhythms

- **Solitude (personal worship)- this is an UP rhythm.**  
Jesus kept His focus on time with God as He prayed, studied the Scriptures, meditated and listened to the voice of God.
- **Community- this is an IN rhythm.**  
Jesus invited others to be in deep relationship with Him. Forming community was the way Jesus intended to change the world. We are invited in to that same type of community and should desire to invite others in as well. Community isn't about forming a Christian club and keeping everyone else out- it's a place to serve call of Jesus to make disciples.  
And that brings us to the rhythm we want to focus on today...
- **Mission- this is an OUT rhythm.**

Jesus gave us what we use as a definition of a disciple when He called His earliest followers:

:: **Matthew 4:19 (ESV)**

**19 Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men.**

**A disciple is one who follows Jesus, is being changed by Jesus and is on mission with Jesus.**

This means we embrace the same focus Jesus had of utilizing a community of followers to spread the gospel (fish for men). When we think of fishing we think of an individual standing on a boat or by the shore of a lake with a fishing line and a single hook. When Jesus talked to these men who were literally fishermen about

this concept, they would have envisioned going out in the deep waters, casting a large net and attempting to haul in as many fish as they could at a time. Jesus' call to fish for men was a call to seek out and bring in as many people as possible into His Kingdom.

Part of the problem with Western Christianity is we have boiled our faith down to what we need to do to have our sins forgiven so we can go to heaven when we die. Too many people are told the path to repentance for salvation through faith but then are never told what is supposed to result from their faith- we are commanded to join Jesus in His mission of making disciples!

When you believe in Jesus for salvation from your sins, that's just the starting point of the journey, not the finish line! From the moment you trust Jesus in faith to be your Savior you begin a lifelong journey with Him as a disciple, growing in your understanding of what it means to be on mission with Jesus. I think too many Christians are bored with church and misunderstand their faith because they think salvation is the end goal. In reality, the real fun begins as we learn to join Jesus to change the world by being on mission with Him!

Look with me at the prayer Jesus offers to God the night He is arrested as the cross looms before Him. Jesus is coming to the end of His life. The finish line is in front of Him and this is what He prays:

**:: John 17:4-8**

**4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.**

**5 And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.**

**6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word.**

**7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.**

**8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.**

When Jesus prays these words He says the work God gave him to do was finished. Here's what is interesting about that- when we think of Jesus saying "It is finished," we think of Him on the cross as He dies for the sins of mankind. But in this instance, Jesus has still not gone to the cross. What work has He finished? The work of making disciples who will carry on His mission after His death, burial, resurrection and ascension back to heaven.

In this prayer I think we can find what it means to be on mission with Jesus in the same way He was on mission with God the Father. There are three primary elements for us to learn about this rhythm of being on mission.

## **1. Bring glory to God.**

Everything Jesus did brought glory to God. His first priority was always to act in reverent obedience to God the Father. Jesus says in verse 4, "I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do." The first aspect of Jesus being on mission was to make God famous.

When we join the mission and work of Jesus to make disciples the heartbeat of our lives has to be the glory of God.

I had a seminary professor who repeatedly said, "The glory of God is always the issue." In every element of your life, as a student, child, parent, spouse, employee, coach, etc... learn to constantly ask yourself the question: Does this bring glory to God?

**:: 1 Corinthians 10:31**

**31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.**

## **2. Reveal the Father to the world.**

- Personal relationships
- Acquaintances
- Strangers

Jesus spent every day helping people better understand who God was. No matter where He went or what He was doing, Jesus brought glory to God by revealing Him to the world.

## **3. Guide people to obey God.**

For us to learn to develop this rhythm of being on mission with God we need to learn from Jesus what being on mission looks like. Let me take a few minutes to clear some things up so we all are thinking about this on the same level.

**Being on mission is not...**

**...just going on mission trips.**

**...simply presenting the gospel as an evangelistic plea.**

**...just serving in the church or community.**

Each of these things is part of being on mission with God, but none of them by themselves fulfills the mission of Jesus.

Then what does it mean to be on mission with Jesus?

In Matthew's account of the gospel story we get the final words of Jesus as He leaves earth to return to the Father. His final words are our mission.

**:: Matthew 28:18-20**

**18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.**

**19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,**

**20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**Being on mission...**

**...is personally knowing God and being changed by Him through obedience to the Holy Spirit.**

Being on mission begins with personal relationship. Jesus told us all authority had been given to Him- therefore, go... We can't go and be actively on mission if we don't know the One who is sending us.

**...is inviting and helping people in your every day life activity to know God.**

There are a couple things that are important to point out here.

1. Disciples of Jesus are to baptize others in the name of the Father, Son and H.S. This means each of us are meant to invite others to experience the life changing power of salvation that is offered to them through a relationship with Jesus.
2. This should happen in your every day life activity. You don't have to wait until you go on a mission trip to engage in this behavior. The best way to think about what Jesus said in Matthew is “As you go, make disciples...” This may be at work, home, at school, on the football field, at the gym, in your neighborhood, etc... We are supposed to be people on mission with Jesus daily and being gospel centered in our daily activities.

**...is teaching people to obey God as they grow as disciples.**

Matthew 28:20 says, “...[teach]ing them to obey everything I have commanded you.”

Disciples of Jesus, who are on mission with God, look to guide others to obey the teachings of Jesus. I have conversations all the time with people who have been Christians for a long time, but they rarely let the teachings of the Bible speak into their daily lives and their areas of struggle. It's amazing how many problem areas of my life disappear when I simply practice obedience to the direct teachings and commands of God. The struggle is, we either don't know God's Word well enough to obey it, or we think we know better than God how to handle our lives. When we are on mission with Jesus we step into the lives of others and help them know what God says and then act in obedience.

Let me end with a few practical thoughts about how to take some steps to move from being a casual observer to being on mission in your faith.

**Being on mission requires intentionality on the part of disciples of Jesus. We won't accidentally be on mission!**

Just like in anything else in life- marriage, parenting, your job- if you aren't intentional in joining the mission of Jesus, you will find yourself drifting. I hear this kind of story all the time:

"I used to be so passionate about my faith. Then I got busy with work and family and the next thing I knew months had gone by and I hadn't been to church or read my Bible or prayed. Now I feel so far from God I don't know what to do."

Drifting is dangerous! You need to be intentional to be on mission with God.

Being on mission with Jesus means we are bringing glory to God, revealing God to the world through our relationships and helping people learn to obey the teachings of God. That's what Jesus did and that's what we are to do as we join His mission. So, how do we do that?

Jesus used what we call the SCMD method of discipleship. If you look at the life and ministry of Jesus you will see this method unfold throughout His time on earth. Here's what that means:

Share  
Connect  
Minister  
Disciple

As we join Jesus on mission this is how you can be intentional about helping people take next steps in their spiritual growth.

Share the gospel, share your life, share truth

Connect people to God, to other believers to purpose

Train people to minister- help them find the place they can use their gifts and talents for the glory of God and the benefit of others

Release people to make disciples- as people mature in their faith eventually they have to move from being discipled to making disciples. It's not just the role of the paid staff and missionaries to make disciples. This was the instruction of Jesus to all who follow Him to eventually move to the point that they are not being invested in, but are investing in someone else.

Here's the last thing I want to leave with you today:

**Being on mission requires self-sacrifice. Jesus' definition of love was to give your whole self- give your life for your friends.**

As we follow Jesus the invitation to "come and see" will give way to the command "come and die!"

(If you want to be my disciple you must deny yourself, take up your cross daily and follow me.)

- Pray

### Life Group Discussion Guide

Follow up with your group if you asked this question last week: "What is one action step you think God is asking you to take this week to follow Him, be changed by Him or be on mission with Him?"

Set up the passage: The chapter we are going to look at tonight is a prayer by Jesus on the night he was arrested and taken to trial prior to the crucifixion. If someone knows they are about to die the last things they take time to say are important. Jesus was being very intentional about what He spent time talking to God about in these last hours of his life.

Read John 17 together.

1. Describe what you see Jesus focusing on as he prayed. What stands out to you?
2. Why do you think Jesus spends so much time praying for his disciples?
3. In the message Sunday Joel listed three things it meant for Jesus to be on mission: He brought glory to God; He revealed God to the world; and He taught the disciples to be obedient to the Word of God.
  - a. How are you meant to bring glory to God as His disciples?
  - b. Where are you most able to reveal God to the world?
  - c. How do you practice obedience to God in your personal life?
4. What is one action step you think God is asking you to take this week to follow Him, be changed by Him or be on mission with Him?
  - Let the group know you will take notes and plan to begin next week following up on these things!

Reminder: Try to find time to pray for things beyond who is sick, a work project, etc... While important, let's not get stuck there when we pray. What things do we need to be seeking God about in our lives and world? If prayer moves heaven and gets to the ear of Almighty God, what should we pray for as a group/church? This may be a good opportunity to divide into groups of men and women to share needs and pray with one another.