

Lesson 10

Our Mission

Then he said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned, Mark 16.15-16.

Introduction

The mission of the church is for the purpose of declaring God's holiness, power, and providing care. We exist to know God and to make Him known. Going forward in our mission means that we exalt Christ and proclaim His gospel.

What is the local congregation to be about?

What is its mission going forward?

What principles encompass it?

Soul-Winning

The local congregation must be committed to the great commission, pledging to make every effort to touch the hearts of others with Jesus. It should be seen in our pulpit preaching, every Bible class, media outreach, *everywhere*. It should always be seen in the one-on-one interactions we have with people inside our community.

We must be committed to sharing Jesus and shining our light.

"You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven," Matthew 5.14-16.

Discipleship

The local church needs to be committed to coming along side each other to help everyone be transformed into the image of Christ. This work of transformation is produced by the Spirit, who dwells within

We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror at the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit,
2 Corinthians 3.18

We should also refer to Ephesians 4.17-32 and Romans 12.1-2.

How committed are we to this process?

- Personally: *Let us hold on to the confession of our hope without wavering, since he who promised is faithful*, Hebrews 10.23.

- To helping others in their transformation: *And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works*, Hebrews 10.24.

Reverence

When we come together to worship God, we do so in reverence and praise. We exalt God. We honor our King and Creator. The Psalmist said it this way:

Acknowledge that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are his— his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name, Psalm 100.3-4.

Autonomy

Churches of Christ in the New Testament were independent of each other. They were self-governing under the headship of Christ, Ephesians 1.22-23. We need to remember:

- Congregations are not governed by the opinion of other congregations in the area.
- Not to be preoccupied with our stance on the divisions of the past.
- The need to be focused on being a church and dwelling with brethren from different perspectives in harmony.
- To be building bridges, not walls.

Authority

Local congregations should view the Scripture as the authoritative word of God – just as the Thessalonians did: This is why we constantly thank God, because when you received the word of God that you heard from us, you welcomed it not as a human message, but as it truly is, the word of God, which also works effectively in you who believe, 1 Thessalonians 2.13. Our congregation needs to be committed to following the commands of God, as well as the examples of the apostles as revealed Scripture.

There should never be any bending to the shifting demands of secular culture and there should always be diligent work to allow God’s word to be taught without reservation. Every action we take as a congregation needs to be governed by the word of God.

Vision

In Proverbs 29.18, Solomon said *where there is no vision, the people perish*. The shepherds and ministers at Cornerstone are committed to designing and implementing a plan of study each year so that we can grow more effective and be better prepared to handle this life in preparation for the next.

See the purpose behind our vision plan.

Excellence

We want to focus on the beauty of Christ and strive for excellence in all we do. This is the principle behind Philippians 4.8:

Finally brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable—if there is any moral excellence and if there is anything praiseworthy—dwell on these things.

Striving for excellence is all driven by hard work, diligence, and personal sacrifice. It is all a result of hearts of love and devotion to God. We have a desire for God's glory and expansion of the kingdom ... and it shows!

Unity

Our church family needs to be committed to love and care for one another. The principles of Ephesians 4.1-3 must drive us:

Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Conclusion

This is our mission. This is who we are. We need to embrace it.

For Thought and Reflection

1. What does our mission have to do with being knit together?
2. Is the mission ever about us? If not, upon who should we focus? Why?
3. How committed are you to the mission of soul-winning? Who are some people you can touch with the gospel?
4. Why is discipleship such an important part of the mission of the church?
5. Define reverence. Talk about its importance to the mission of the church.

6. Define autonomy. Who will judge this congregation? Does it matter what other congregations think? Explain.

7. With what regard should the local congregation hold Scripture? Why?

8. What will happen to the congregation that does not engage in planning and looking ahead? What are some things you can do to encourage our leaders as they plan for the future?

9. What does excellence look like to you?

10. Explain the importance of unity within the local church.