



THE FIND & FOLLOW EXPERIMENT:

Spend 2% of Your Time in a Missional Context

Matthew 28:18-20

TIME is a precious GIFT. The older I get, the more I value the time that I get to spend with people that I love doing the things that are most important to me. Even with that being said, I realize that I still WASTE so much time on meaningless things. Personally, I watch too much TV. It is said that the average person spends way more time watching television than they realize! **According to the A.C. Nielsen Co., the average American watches more than 4 hours of TV each day (or 28 hours/week, or 2 months of nonstop TV-watching per year). In a 65-year life, that person will have spent 9 years glued to the tube.**

That HORRIFIES me! It also puts things in perspective. Not that I believe that all of us spend 4 hours a day watching television, but who knows? Maybe you spend your time GAMING, or maybe SURFING the WEB, or preparing for or playing at your HOBBY! The point is, we have way more time on our hands than we admit. What we DO with it DISPLAYS what we VALUE!

Today, we want to talk about the commitment to spend 2% of your time in 2022 in a MISSIONAL CONTEXT. This means that you will spend what amounts to just over ONE WEEK on the mission field somewhere this year. This could be in Jamaica or in Boston or even right here in Mississippi. This means that you will SET ASIDE 7 days this year to serve God as a missionary on the mission field . . . somewhere. It does not have to be 7 days in a row, and it does not all have to be spent in the SAME missional context. But it is a commitment to spend at least 7 days as a missionary on a mission field. How does this strike you? Does it scare you? Excite you? Are you CONFLICTED about it? I think it is a marvelous and NECESSARY commitment that believers should make, especially in light of what we will study today. Before we talk about what this commitment MEANS or how this commitment will AFFECT us, we need to ask a simpler question.

WHY GO ON MISSION?

Going on the mission field sounds so OUT-OF-REACH for so many people. I think this is because so many people FEEL UNQUALIFIED to be a missionary. Well, relax. **If you are a follower of Christ, then you are ALREADY a missionary everywhere you go. The call to GO on mission just HIGHLIGHTS the truth of what we are should be doing daily.** Now (contrary to how it may feel so

far), I have no desire to GUILT you into going on mission. I don't think that is a good motivator anyway. I believe that the reasons why we ought to go on mission are much more COMPELLING and DESIREABLE than any NEGATIVE motivation. Even if you have never been on a mission trip, I want you to think about why you would WANT to go in 2021. Here are some really great reasons.

To MAGNIFY the Lord Jesus Christ for his amazing grace and love.

Ephesians 2:4-10 NIV

4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. 6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. **10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.**

Living and going on mission is how we GLORIFY Christ Jesus! We are now his WORKMANSHIP that are called to do his preordained GOOD WORKS. What work could be greater than pointing others toward the One that rescued us? We have the unique opportunity to MAGNIFY the Lord Jesus by bringing ATTENTION to him and his work on the cross when we go on mission. It is INTENTIONAL.

Lisa and I have been listening to our scriptures together on the CBR reading plan all throughout this month. The passage one day was about the moment when Mary broke a very expensive box of perfume in order to pour it onto the head of the Lord Jesus. She did it as an act of worship and (as Jesus said) to prepare his body ahead of time for his burial. It was a beautiful act of EXTRAVAGANT WORSHIP. The disciples, however, rebuked her for it, saying that it was a horrible WASTE of money. Lisa and I talked about how very HEARTLESS that was on the part of the disciples. Did they not think that Christ was WORTH the price of one precious alabaster box of ointment? Apparently not! But Jesus saw her heart and knew her thoughts, and he praised her for her actions. **Her ACTIONS revealed that she KNEW who he was, and that she loved him deeply.** Jesus said that she would be honored for generations because of what she did. He was right, because here we are today some 2,000 years later talking about her simple act of worship!

What does worship look like in your life? Does it EVER look EXTRAVAGANT? **All of the messages in this series are about each of us knowing Christ better or making him known in some way.** The driving FORCE for our commitments is not a desire to be better or more religious people,

but to EXPRESS ETERNAL GRATITUDE to the One that saved us and to GLORIFY him with our lives and with our lips! This is our Alabaster Box.

To give people GENUINE HOPE! Ephesians 2:12-13 NIV

12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, **without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**

Have you ever been a MESSENGER that carried GOOD NEWS to someone? I love sharing good news. As a boss, when I get to tell our staff that they got a RAISE or a BONUS, it is a magical moment for me. Imagine being a doctor that gets to tell a patient that it is NOT CANCER! As believers, we get to tell people the best news of all. Many people think that God is either MAD at them because of all that they have done wrong, or that he does NOT CARE for them because they don't do enough good or know their bible well enough or go to church enough. I love being able to tell them that God LOVES them and CARES so much for them that he gave his only Son to die for them even while they were not thinking of him at all! We are carriers of Good News. **This news gives HOPE to those that think they are cut off from God and without any real promise of heaven when they die.** They are WRONG, and we get to give them to REAL SCOOP. Have you ever done this? Just this past month, I got to tell a young woman who had never really heard the Gospel the truth about what Jesus had done for her. The look on her face and the tears flowing from her eyes were a priceless picture of what hope can do for someone. This is the blessing of the missionary.

Another amazing benefit of going on mission is that it is actually a BLAST! I have had more fun on mission trips than I have had on many vacations. **[Just talk about Mexico (first ever trip), Poland, La Paz, etc.]**

***To OBEY what Christ COMMANDED us to do! Matthew 28:18-20 NIV**

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."

***GOING is a key command in scripture.** Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18-20. You cannot reach "all nations" by staying in your own backyard!

The Gospel was first brought into Judea and Samaria by Spirit-filled believers and NOT by the Apostles! These bold believers were not occupational ministers!

- Phillip was a DEACON and not an APOSTLE. [Acts 5]
- These believers did NOT NEED a church program to witness. It was personal!
- The first role the Apostles had in Samaria was to CONFIRM the reality of what GOD HAD DONE THROUGH these scattered, bold believers! [Acts 8:14-16]

J.D. Greear:

“The church grows not by the preaching of a few anointed Apostles, but when every believer is filled with the Spirit and testifies to the gospel in the streets.”

God even sovereignly used the PERSECUTION of the church to help spread the Gospel. It does not have to take PAIN to drive us to go, but God will use it if it does! ***These bold believers had been SCATTERED by God! (Acts 8:4) [Scattered = Sown]**

- A true believer is a SEED that gets SOWN wherever he goes.
ARE YOU A TRUE SEED?

WHAT “GOING ON MISSION” REQUIRES

***Going into a missional context requires INTENTIONAL effort.**

Romans 10:14-15 NIV

14 How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? 15 And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"

Sent. This is a beautiful word. It means you GO ON PURPOSE. You have a REASON for going that is NOT TYPICAL of most trips. You have a sense of ANTICIPATION on a mission trip that is unlike any other trip you will ever take. You are going for the sake of SOULS, and you have the perfect story to tell people as you SERVE them. The actual service you do for them quite often OPENS DOORS of conversational opportunity for you. This is so much fun.

Not only that; spending INTENTIONAL time in a missional context makes you more INTENTIONAL in your EVERYDAY mission field! When you come home, you know that your life is meant for something more important than what you knew before. You will be more attuned to the fact that simple conversations and little acts of kindness are DOORWAYS for the Gospel, and you

will be bolder to walk through them. You will also see that BEING a missionary is what you already ARE.

Going into a missional context requires PRACTICAL RESOURCES.

***Money** – You will have to use some of your own money to pay the way to go on mission. This is a chance for you to “store up treasure” for yourself in heaven. And it is a JOY. You will be amazed at how far money goes on the mission field, and the needs that it meets. You will not be sad that you spent a few dollars on this eternal mission! We do our best to make every trip affordable

***Skills** – You will have the privilege to use the skills that you already possess to SERVE those who do not know Christ. This may involve working with children, or working in some kind of construction, or maybe even just having simple conversations. Don’t think that being a missionary is just about standing up in front of a lot of people and preaching. It is not. It is more often about quiet conversations with people you meet as you serve, telling them about what Christ has done for you. It is a chance to let them see your LIFE as well as hear your WORDS!

***Energy** – I have never been more exhausted in my life than when I have gone on mission trips. But I have never been as ENERGIZED by anything I have done, either! You will have to WORK on a mission trip. It is not a vacation. It is SERVICE for the sake of the Kingdom, and we want to be the BEST SERVANTS that people have ever seen while we are there.

Going into a missional context requires TIME.

We have come full circle! You alone determine how you will use your time. You will have to PLAN to go into a missional context. You will have to SACRIFICE some other activities in order to go. But the time you spend will become eternally valuable!

Going into a missional context will forever change your PERSPECTIVE.

- On the blessing of living in a very prosperous, blessed nation
- On the PRIVILEGE of hearing the Gospel and having the Word.

When did you first hear the Gospel? Was it in a church that you regularly attended? Has it ever occurred to you how PRECIOUS and RARE that moment was in light of how many have NEVER heard?

I want to finish this message by reading the Message paraphrase of what Jesus said to Paul when he called him to go on mission. I think it is a perfect way to sum up what we get to do when we answer the call as well! **Acts 26:15-18 The Message**

¹⁵⁻¹⁶ “I said, ‘Who are you, Master?’ “The voice answered, ‘I am Jesus, the One you’re hunting down like an animal. But now, up on your feet—I have a job for you. I’ve handpicked you to be a servant and witness to what’s happened today, and to what I am going to show you.

¹⁷⁻¹⁸ “‘I’m sending you off to open the eyes of the outsiders so they can see the difference between dark and light, and choose light, see the difference between Satan and God, and choose God. I’m sending you off to present my offer of sins forgiven, and a place in the family, inviting them into the company of those who begin real living by believing in me.’

Let’s pray.