

Week Two: March 4, 2020 – March 10, 2020



HIS MISSION

I am being sent by Jesus to bless others and invite them to follow Him.

There should be no surprise that a church with the word “Missionary” in the name would embrace Mission as an important marker of a Jesus follower. Happily, it is now a widespread understanding that one does not have to cross a large body of water in order to be a missionary. We understand that every believer is to be on mission but that can lead to stress because we feel insufficient for the task. However, as the marker at the top of this page points out, it doesn’t have to be as complicated as all the advertised methods might make us think.

The central point of living on mission is to recognize that we are living for others. Christian mission finds clear focus on the central fact that we are to live for Jesus. The extension of this focus is to live like Jesus who clearly lived for others. We believe that Christian mission must include introducing people to Jesus but, again, need not and should not be limited only to a sharing of a gospel presentation. Blessing others should have a holistic interest in the wellbeing of others which certainly includes right relationship with God through Jesus but also addresses other areas of human experience.

The Mission to practice this week is to go into every day seeking to bless people who come across your path. As with other weeks of this training, we hope that we can establish life patterns that will stay with us well beyond this short revisit of the material.



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We often have very complicated ideas about what it means to live our lives on mission. Many strategies have been presented over the years for sharing our faith. Many of these programs are quite intimidating in that they require the memorization of questions to ask and answers to give. For those of us who have used some of these strategies we may well have found some value with them but did discover that they are not effective in every situation. One of the liberating things to be learned in The Way of Jesus training is that our mission can be broken down into the simple agenda of blessing others and inviting them to follow Jesus. The great benefit of this approach is that it contributes to the establishment of a real relationship with the individual that helps others to positively evaluate the credibility of the message about Jesus.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Exodus 34:1-9, 27-28

Matthew 18:10-14

Let's Get Personal:

What are some ways that you have been blessed in your life? Think of ways the Lord has blessed you and people that he used to do that.

If possible, bless those people who have blessed you by giving them a visit, a call, an email, a text, or maybe even a good old letter, and let them know how the Lord has used them in your life.

My Reflections

LISTEN – What did God say to me?

TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?



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We do not earn our salvation by doing good works. Rather, we express our love for God by doing good works. This might even be called 'blessing God.' As we read in Ephesians, *For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.* (Ephesians 2:10)

Worship is not to be limited to the sanctuary. True worship is a way of life that finds expression as we allow God's blessing to overflow through us. In the New Testament reading from 2 Timothy we catch a glimpse of the overflow of blessing that results from parents and grandparents who follow Jesus. This week we might be able to bless many people around us which might begin generations of blessing as a result.

Read and reflect on the following passages.

You can record your reflections on the next page.

Isaiah 51:1-3

2 Timothy 1:3-7

Let's Get Personal:

Some people are easy to bless. Have you been sent by Jesus to bless people that you find difficult to love?

How have you worked through that situation in the past?

What are ways that you discovered God's love flowing through you? Who has God assigned you to bless today?

My Reflections

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It is not unusual to run into people who have the idea that God is angry with them. While the conviction of the Holy Spirit is an uncomfortable experience, there is no reason to think that God is thereby expressing anger in such conviction. Rather, the desired result is repentance. As we bless others the Spirit can use us to convince people that God has extended His mercy through Jesus. This is a significant part of inviting others to follow Jesus. This starts by blessing others.

We will probably not find that general efforts to bless others will encounter a lot of opposition. We might be refused but not strenuously opposed. However, many have discovered that once we start inviting people to Jesus, we find the opposition of spiritual warfare. This can be intimidating and become a real test of our resolve to bless others. In the history of the church there were many people who blessed those who actively opposed them. They blessed their persecutors and in so doing they followed Jesus and became a blessing to many.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Micah 7:18-20

Romans 3:21-31

Let's Get Personal:

We can learn a lot from observing brothers and sisters who stood firm in the face of persecution. Have you made yourself aware of those brothers and sisters are presently serving the Lord in the face of persecution?

My Reflections

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Doing good deeds is not a replacement for speaking about Jesus. Both our words and actions flow from hearts that are fixed on Jesus. It's a matter of our identity to point people to Jesus. This is our mission. As Peter wrote, *But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect (1 Pet 3:15).* The reason for our hope could be academic considerations like we find in the discipline of Apologetics, but it should also be the personal reasons of our experience of the Lord. The latter is something that every follower of Jesus should be able to share. Perhaps this week we can reflect on a few things that we could share with someone if we had about three minutes to turn attention to Jesus.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Isaiah 51:4-8

Luke 7:1-10

Let's Get Personal:

What are some reasons that we might hesitate to speak about Jesus and just want our deeds to be our public record?

Have you considered specific reasons that you have for trusting in Jesus? Give it some thought as you want to be ready to use the relationships you will establish through blessing others to invite people to follow Jesus.

My Reflections

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OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?

The Second Anchor is the Lord's Prayer

The version in this material is a little different than the way we say it in our service. Read through and even memorize this translation and consider whether some things stand out to you in a different way.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven:

May your holy name be honored;

your Kingdom come;

your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us today the food we need.

Forgive us the wrongs we have done,

as we forgive the wrongs that others have done to us.

Keep us from yielding to temptation and deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, Forever and ever.

Amen



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When you bless others, you are writing some good bits into your own story even as you write some good bits into the story of those who are around you. In other words, it is very fulfilling to serve others. Even beyond those personal benefits, you will find yourself involved in building community which sets a solid foundation for future ministry.

At one time there was a clear distinction made between evangelism and discipleship. By starting with blessing others evangelism becomes a part of discipleship. The relationship that is established with someone before they come into a personal relationship with Jesus is the very relationship that will be effective in helping them toward maturity in Christ.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Psalms 128

Numbers 21:4-9

Hebrews 3:1-6

Let's Get Personal:

Have you taken time to thank the Lord for the people that He has brought into your life as those that you are able to bless?

Think of some ways that your life has been enriched by these people.

Take time to bless these people by letting them know you have been blessed by knowing them.

My Reflections

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We regularly emphasize the act of personal decision as a beginning point in following Jesus. Billy Graham had been involved in the evangelical movement since the beginning of the 1950's and the call to decision which has been a hallmark of his ministry has been influential in our approach. While we agree that such personal decision is part of our appropriation of what Christ has done for us, we need to underscore that such a decision is only possible because God first made a personal decision to send his only son, Jesus, to die for us. With this in view, think about how others blessed you by inviting you to follow Jesus. Take up the challenge to bless others in this way.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Isaiah 65:17-25

Romans 4:6-13

Let's Get Personal:

Have you been able to experience some new relationships this week with people that the Lord brought across your path?

Did you take the opportunity to bless them? What could you have done different? Did you have the opportunity to invite them to follow Jesus?

Will you have more opportunity to develop that relationship?

My Reflections

LISTEN – What did God say to me?

TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

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