

Week Two: February 21, 2018 – February 27, 2018



HIS MISSION

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

Reportedly David Livingston said “God only had one son and he was a missionary.”

As a church with the word “Missionary” in our name you can’t be surprised that Mission is raised as one of the markers of the Way of Jesus. However, you will notice that this is not “missions” in the sense of sending someone over a body of water to speak to another culture. Rather, this speaks of the mission of believers into the culture (or cultures) that are represented by those to whom we are sent.

We have made the work of mission quite complicated. The marker we will be considering this week breaks it down to a simple two-fold task. We go into our day seeking to bless people who come across our path. This blessing takes many practical shapes. For one thing, we should honour people as beings who are created in the image of God. Yet, this blessing is not to be reduced to simply being a good neighbour. We will be considering the fact that the greatest blessing we can give is to invite people to join us and follow Jesus.



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Wherever Jesus went He brought the blessing of God. In Acts 10:38, we read that Jesus went around doing good and healing. Our calling is to do good and to present the work that God has done in us as the reason.

We often carry very complicated ideas about what our mission should be. 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 too.

As we consider the life of Jesus we should be able to see that blessing others is following him.

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

Genesis 1:28

Genesis 12:3

Romans 12:14

Let's Get Personal:

Do you feel 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.

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.' Our highest calling is to serve the Lord and all we have to give him is what he has given us. Our worship is not to be contained to the sanctuary. Worship is a way of life that finds expression as we allow God's blessing to overflow through our blessing others. As Jesus said, *"In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:16)

Not only should this saying be memorized this week, it should be acted on.

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

John 20:21-23

Acts 10:38

Let's Get Personal:

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?

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There is a considerable difference between blessing people that we might otherwise overlook apart from Jesus' commission and blessing those who actively oppose us. In the history of the church there were many people who blessed their persecutors. In so doing they are following Jesus inasmuch as Jesus modelled this for us.

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

Luke 6:27-35

Matthew 5:43-48

Let's Get Personal:

The book *Tortured for Christ* presents the story of a Romanian pastor, Richard Wurmbrand, who was imprisoned for fourteen years during the Communist Era in Romania. After his release he led a ministry called Voice of the Martyrs that originally focused on people who were suffering for Jesus in Communist countries. This ministry now shines the light on people who are suffering for Jesus in Muslim or primarily Muslim nations. Have you made yourself aware of those brothers and sisters who are presently serving the Lord in the face of persecution? Would you pray for them today?

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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. (1 Pet 3:15). Our motivation for doing good deeds is to please Our Master so we should be quick to point out that the blessing that we offer is really Jesus' blessing.

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

1 Peter 2:11

1 Peter 3:16-22

Let's Get Personal:

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

Dorothy Reid, a missionary to Romania, will be with us tomorrow in our worship service. As you listen to her you might want to reflect on where that country would be if people never identified who was ultimately behind the good deeds that mission agencies have shown that country.

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The Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer serves as an anchor for Jesus' followers as Jesus' response to his early follower's request that Jesus would teach them to pray.

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. What we need to explore is how we can best point out that it is God’s work through us. The Way of Jesus training offers an interesting perspective with the language of followers of Jesus being on a journey. As an example we might think of the scenario in which someone asks, “Why did you do this good thing?” and we might answer, “*I am learning to be like Jesus and Jesus wants me to do good to others – that’s all I am trying to do.*” This is a more natural witness of Jesus work than many other methods that might be familiar to us.

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

1 John 3:17

James 2:17

Let’s Get Personal:

When you bless others, you ARE a witness Stop worrying about ‘giving a witness’: Know that YOU ARE A WITNESS - good, bad or ugly. *Live like Jesus, for Jesus and in the power of His Spirit .*

How do you react to people who beg for money? We might not be faced with this regularly be it might be even harder to know how to respond when it is only occasional. What did you do last time someone asked you in person or on the street side with a sign? What will you do next time?

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How do we bless?

GAWP is the acronym

We bless with our Gifts, Our Acts, Our Words and Our Prayers.

Make blessing a way of life. Ask God to make you a blessing. Blessing is doing good with warmth and engagement. It is being an agent of the God of Blessing. Blessing is something that we do intentionally (we plan ahead) and incidentally (as the opportunity arises or surprises). Blessing is done together. Blessing is done individually. It is about investing in the lives of others, and it is about inviting others into your life. Blessing is our Gateway to others and to creating community. It is the way that we put love in action.

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

1 John 3:16

Let's Get Personal:

How are you at receiving blessing? That can be more difficult for some than giving a blessing.

By receiving a blessing from someone and then thanking them, both of you are blessed. Think about it!

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