

Message #1072
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"COMPLETING YOUR MISSION"
{Matthew 28: 16-20; Acts 1: 4-8}
Trinity Presbyterian Church
October 24, 2004

INTRODUCTION

The past 40 days have gone by so quickly. We've discovered thus far that...

1. WORSHIP is to know and love God
2. FELLOWSHIP is learning to love one another
3. DISCIPLESHIP is becoming like Christ
4. SERVICE is learning to use our SHAPE [our abilities] for God in serving Him...and others

This morning we are going to discuss the fifth purpose--you were made for MISSION. Read with me what Jesus said in John 17: 18-- "In the same way you gave Me a mission in the world, I give them a mission in the world."

Now, circle the phrase "in the world."

Last week, as you recall, we talked about how you need a ministry in the church.

Today I want to emphasize: You need a mission in the world.

We ALL need a ministry to both believers and unbelievers!

...we need a ministry to the Body {the family of God}

...and, we need a mission IN the world!

Jesus said in John 20: 21: "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you!"

The logical question is: What is our mission? Paul made it real specific in Acts 20-- read it with me...

"The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work the Lord Jesus gave me TO TELL PEOPLE THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT GOD'S GRACE!"

So, here's our fifth purpose {write it down}--TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS!

Once I know that God is in control...

...once I know that God made me to love me...

...once I know that my life isn't an accident

...once I know that life has a purpose

God expects us to share that with other people!

Once you comprehend what God has been saying to you these past 40 days, you will understand that God wants you to pass it on to other people!

God wants you to share the good news! There's a word for this:

EVANGELISM!

...conjures up images in many people's minds

...some good

...some not so good

But, I'm going to ask you to erase all of those images and understand that

"evangelism" is just the Greek word for "good news!"

The Bible says that once you know the good news--that God loves you...has a purpose for your life...then, God wants you to pass it on, sharing the good news with others!

The first question is: WHERE? Read with me the passage found in Acts 1: 8...

"You will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth!"

When Jesus told this to His disciples they were in Jerusalem. So, here's the point--

He's saying--start at home! Start with the people closest to you...in your own city and community!

Then {once you've done that} He says to go to Judea and Samaria--the next community and county...and the Samaritans just happen to be different culturally and racially.

So, He says, I want you to go to the people nearby--even if they're different from you--and, when you've done that--go to the ends of the earth--reach everybody else!

WHAT DOES JESUS CALL US TO BE? WITNESSES!

What is a witness?

...a witness is somebody who tells what they've seen

...a witness is one who tells what has happened to them

Nobody is a better witness on your life than you.

...Nobody can share what God has done in your life but you!

...**YOU ARE THE AUTHORITY ON YOUR LIFE!**

So, Jesus is saying in essence: "I want you to GO over and tell all the people you know what God has done for you!"

Our next verse says: "This was God's plan for all of history which He carried out through Jesus Christ, our Lord!"

...think of this--God has chosen US to complete HIS mission!

...what Jesus started we are to complete!

COMPLETING MY MISSION

I recently heard this story: God is in heaven and an angel comes up and God says, 'My plan is to give the good news to My children on earth and ask them to share it!' The angel replies: 'What if they don't? What is plan B?' And God said: 'There is no plan B!'"

God is counting on YOU to share with those in your world! Write it down on your outline: **I MUST SHARE WITH THOSE IN MY WORLD!**

Jesus healed a man one day and the man was so thrilled that he asked

Jesus if he could travel with Him. Jesus said: "No, I don't want you to do that!" He then said--read it with me...

"Go back home and tell people how much God has done for you. So that man went all over town telling how much Jesus had done for him."

...circle the phrase: "Go back home!"

That's precisely what He tells us--don't go running off somewhere....start at home!

Before you think of the next community--worldwide mission endeavors--start with the people in your Jerusalem....home! Mission begins at home...then reaches out to the global community!

Now you ask: **WHY?**

First--there are people out there waiting for you today!

Every single poll says Americans are more interested in spiritual things now than they were ten years ago.

The Gallup Poll did a survey and discovered that 65 million Americans have no church home...**BUT, 34 MILLION OF THEM SAID THEY WOULD ATTEND IF SOMEBODY WOULD JUST INVITE THEM!**

What are we waiting for? There are 34 million people in U.S.A. just waiting for an invitation to worship!

...talk about a mission field

...people waiting to hear your story

..your witness.

There are many tools available to us to share the good news with others...

...Peace with God by Billy Graham

...Four Spiritual Laws by Bill Bright
...Good News by D. James Kennedy
...and Rick Warren's: Life We're Meant to Live
Bruce and Ken are going to model this can be done...

ROLE-PLAY

The Bible says that we are to "Be ready at all times to answer anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you!"

God has placed you on earth to complete His mission! To share the good news...to be a witness...to evangelize!

Let me tell you--there are two things you cannot do in heaven!

...you can sing

...fellowship

...serve/worship God

...rest in heaven

But, the two things you cannot do are...

...sin

...tell people who don't know about God's love

Now--in this life--is the ONLY time we have that opportunity!

Read with me the II Peter 3:9 passage--

"God doesn't want anyone to be lost, but He wants all people to change their hearts and lives!"

...God is not willing that any should perish!

...He says we've got to keep reaching out!

Remember how much Jesus reached out on the cross to save the world...you/me!

{arms stretched out on the cross}

Rick Warren tells a moving story about his father...

"He was a man on a mission. He died of cancer. And in the week before he died, his mind went delirious from the cancer and he was awake about 24 hours a day, and he talked aloud in a dreamlike state. And you can learn a lot about somebody listening to their dreams, and I did. The Thursday night before he died, Alyssa, my niece, and Kay, my wife, and I were in that room by his bedside. All of a sudden my dad got very agitated, and he tried to get up and he tried to get out of bed. Kay said, 'Jimmy you've got to lay back down. You're sick...you're dying!'

He kept trying to get out of bed, very agitated, trying to get out. And finally Kay said, 'Jimmy, what are you trying to do? What do you want?' He said, 'I've got to save one more for Jesus. Got to save one

more for Jesus. Got to save one more for Jesus.' He said that probably a hundred times in the next hour. 'Save one more for Jesus. Save one more for Jesus.' This was a man on a mission I remember I was sitting there and I put my head down and I began to cry and thank God for the faith of my father. And he reached up and he put his frail hand on my head; and, almost like a blessing, a commissioning, saying: 'Save one more for Jesus!' And...I intend for that to be the theme of the rest of my life!"

What is your life theme?

So, first I MUST share with those in my world...but, that's not enough.

Now, secondly...

I MUST DARE TO REACH BEYOND MY WORLD

Love DEMANDS that we move BEYOND our comfort zone to people with different background...different education...different language...different economic...different lifestyle.

...what we do...or what we don't do...has ETERNAL consequences!

Listen, if I discovered a cure for AIDS, believe me I'd run up and down the street

letting everyone know--you couldn't keep me quiet!
...we have a message of even greater importance to share
...God loves you
...Christ died for you
...There's eternal hope for you
...God has a purpose for you!
We read in I Corinthians 9...
"Whatever each person is like, I try to find common ground with them to that they will let me tell them about Christ and let Christ save them!"
...we must reach out
...and--listen carefully--GOD EXPECTS US TO MAKE THE FIRST MOVE!
One word from the Great Commission says it all..."GO!"
...you can't spell GOD without "GO"
...you can't spell GOOD NEWS without "GO"
...you can't spell GOSPEL without "GO"
"Stoop down and reach out to those who are oppressed. Share their burdens and so complete Christ's law!" {Galatians 6:2}

WHAT IS GOD'S LAW? LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR...AS YOURSELF!

James wrote that actions speak louder than words...{read it with me}
"Real religion, the kind that passes muster before God the Father, is this: reach out to the homeless and the loveless in their plight."
May I remind you, Jesus always rooted for the underdog--those society tried to ignore: the powerless...the poor...the orphaned...the widowed...the aged...the mentally ill...the social outcasts...the lepers. And if Jesus were alive today He'd be hanging out with the same type of people.
We have two people at Trinity who reach out regularly through Convalescent Hospital Ministry: Linda Bates and Ida Strickland. They reach beyond their comfort zone...they reach out...touch many who are overlooked. I thank God for them.
Our Marthas have given us a golden opportunity to reach out through the OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD BOX sponsored by Samaritan's Purse.
...last year 5.2 million shoe boxes were sent by Christians to the poor and needs children of our world.
...sent to children who live in dire circumstances ...sent into poverty...made homeless...because of war
and famine This is an incredible opportunity for ALL of us to become involved in our Judea and Samaria.
I urge you to stop by the table and see how you can personally become involved in this worthwhile hands-on project.
Someday God is going to judge whether we were doers...or talkers!
...one day He's going to separate the sheep from the goats and He will say...
"I was hungry, and you fed Me. I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink.
I was a stranger, and you invited Me into your home. I was naked, and you gave Me clothing. I was sick and you cared for Me. I was in prison and you visited Me."
And people are going to respond...
"When did we do that for you, Lord? And He says, 'When you have done it to one of the least of My brothers and sisters, you've done it to Me.'"
Remember Jesus' words...
"Jesus replied, 'Let me assure you that no one has ever given up anything for love of Me and to tell others the Good News who won't be given back, a hundred times over...'"
...wow, such dividends!

...that's an incredible investment

So...let's move on--it's not enough to just share with those in my world; and, it's not enough to reach beyond my world. To be like Jesus--write this down--

I MUST CARE ABOUT THE WHOLE WORLD

We care, because God cares for the whole world...read with me the passage from Mark 16: 15...

"Jesus said to His followers: 'Go everywhere in the world and tell the Good news to everyone!'"

I want you to note that this commission was given to ALL believers...not just a select few. He was talking to ALL His followers.

Jesus called people by saying: "Follow Me, and I'll make you a fisher of men!"

...how's fishing?

...if you're not fishing, you're not following!

We have two well versed people in our congregation--very knowledgeable about what God is doing around the world: Dorothy and Don Metzger--Mission Advocates for the entire Presbytery of San Jose. Next week we will have mission representatives from many organizations involved in our closing celebration in our mission fair--people whom YOU support with your dollars. 13 cents of every dollar you give in the general offering goes to mission--at home and around the world. In addition to that you've given over \$6,100 this year to special mission offerings and projects--One Great Hour of Sharing; Pentecost; Peacemaking; Disaster; and the Youth Famine.

That's our responsibility and part of the message to "GO" and I'm still hoping that one day a number from Trinity can go and visit and or become involved in short-term mission projects. Talk with Dorothy and Don about this possibility. May our prayer be...

"Lord, send us around the world with the news of Your saving power and Your eternal plan for all mankind!"

CONCLUSION

God is calling ALL of us to a mission--at home...and beyond into the community...and the world. May we be faithful in our response.

..Moses responded: "Who me?"

...Jonah responded: "Not me!"

...Habakkuk responded: "Why me?"

...Isaiah responded: "Send me!"

May that be our response...

Please pray with me...

Father, more than anything else, I want to fulfill the purposes You made me for. So today, I accept this fifth purpose, my mission to tell others. I want You to use me any time, any way, any place. I want to bring others to You. I want to serve Your purpose in my generation.

And I want to be a part of what You're doing in the world. From this day forward, I want to build my life around Your eternal purposes, and I want to help our church do the same. Help me to reach one more for Jesus. In your name I pray...AMEN