



MISSIONS

A SUNDAY SCHOOL COURSE

DR. PERRY J. HUBBARD

MISSIONS –
A
SUNDAY
SCHOOL
COURSE

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The focus of this course is to help us see that God has always been actively involved in a mission to restore us to the relationship we once had with him. It is also intended to show us the part God wants us to play in helping others understand this. God has a mission and we are called to be part of this mission.

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All scriptures are quoted from the New International Version

Lesson One

A plan called missions

Key Truth – God wants to restore his relationship with man.

Goal – That the student will understand that God’s mission, from the moment man sinned, has been to restore man’s relationship to him and that God wants us to be part of this mission as well.

Scriptures – Genesis 3:15, 4:6-7, 5:24, 6:18, 12:3; Exodus 5:2; Hebrews 11:27

Since creation God has sought to have and maintain a relationship with man. He spent time in the garden with Adam and Eve. He took note of man’s life and gave him responsibility to care for the garden. He took note of man’s physical needs and provided food to sustain him. He noted man’s need for companionship and provided a partner to share the life God had given him. God also saw man’s need to be in touch with him and came to the garden regularly to interact with the man. All of this was based on the fact that God had created man to be like him.

When man failed to heed God’s warning regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, God set in motion a plan to bring an end to the problem that sin had caused. In the first five books of the Old Testament God reveals what he desires from man, what is involved in doing what God

.....
: *Ge 3:15 And I will*
: *put enmity between*
: *you and the woman,*
: *and between your*
: *offspring and hers;*
: *he will crush your*
: *head, and you will*
: *strike his heel.*
:

wants, and the cost involved. It would be God’s mission to draw man back into a relationship with God. Man would be free to choose to pursue that relationship or ignore it.

It would not be a simple process and it would be opposed. Satan was part of bringing an end to God's communion with man in the Garden. Satan would oppose any attempt to restore that relationship. This was shown by God's comments after man sinned (Ge 3:14-16). The serpent would bite man's foot. Satan is always ready to cause pain and trouble. To bring an end to Satan's influence would require force - a crushing blow to the serpent from the offspring of man, a descendant of Adam and Eve. This would be the God-man Jesus Christ who would be the one to bring this about.

Throughout man's history, God has been close to man - seeking out those who would respond, and gradually revealing his plan to crush the power of Satan and restore the relationship that was ruined by sin.

Cain and Enoch

Cain's story reveals that God is clearly aware of our behavior and hates the sin in our lives which drives us away from him. He wants to help us deal with our problem with sin.

.....
: *Ge 4:6-7 Then the Lord said to Cain, "Why are you*
: *angry? Why is your face downcast? If you do what is*
: *right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do*
: *what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to*
: *have you, but you must master it."*
:

Discuss God's concern for you and your life. If God is concerned about you, then what should be your attitude toward others?

Enoch's life reveals what happens when you seek God. God is ready to walk with you and be a part of your life.

Discuss how you can be a part of others finding and walking with God.

Ge 5:24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.

Noah and Abraham

Noah's life and ministry reveal the consequences of mankind's rejection of God. In the midst of widespread rebellion, God directed Noah to build an ark. God was concerned that those who were willing to listen would have both a source of information, in the person of Noah, about what was going to happen so that they could choose to change their attitude and behavior, and also have the means to survive the flood.

Ge 6:18 But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark — you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

Discuss how the ark is a symbol of God's provision of salvation for us. How can we serve as modern-day "arks" for those who do not know Jesus?

Ge 12:3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.

Abraham's life was an example of how God uses those who are faithful to him to bless others. He obeyed God's command to leave his country and go where God would lead him. He chose to build a relationship with God, and God promised to bless him and many others through that

choice.

Why is God so concerned about restoring his relationship with man? Discuss how you can be part of God's plan to restore the relationship that was lost.

How could God use you to bless others around the world?

Pharaoh and Moses

Pharaoh's attitude reveals how far man can wander from God. Even when man is far from God, God is able to reveal his power and presence.

Ex 5:2 Pharaoh said, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him and let Israel go? I do not know the Lord and I will not let Israel go."

Discuss what draws man away from God. What should we do when faced with people who are far from God in their beliefs and actions?

Heb 11:27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king's anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.

Moses' life is an example of just how far God is willing to go to reveal the lie that is contained in false religion and false gods. Moses set aside his fear to trust in God and as a result demonstrated that God is greater than any other god and truly the only God worthy of worship.

What are you doing to help people have a personal relationship with God?



Lesson Two
The goal of missions

Key truth – God created Israel to play a special role in his plan to reach the nations.

Goal – That the student will understand that he, too, has been chosen to be part of God’s plan to reach the nations.

Scripture – Exodus 19:6; 2 Chronicles 6:32-37; Psalms 22:27-28; Isaiah 55:5-7; Micah 4:2; Acts 17:26-27

In the Old Testament, God focuses on the formation and function of the people of Israel and their role in his mission. The Israelites are the descendants of Abraham. These are the people who are to carry out the promise given to Abraham. As God frees them from slavery in Egypt, he tells them that they are to be a nation of priests. They are to act as a bridge for the nations to God. Many of God’s leaders and prophets comprehended this truth and proclaimed it for all to hear.

Ex 19:6 You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.

David and Solomon

David understood Israel’s role in leading the nations to God. Many of his psalms indicate that a time will come when all

Ps 22:27-28 All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him for dominion belongs to the Lord and he rules over the nations.

the peoples, all the nations and all the tribes will understand who God is and so will turn to God and worship him.

David declared that he would proclaim the name of the Lord among the nations (Ps 18:49 and Ps 96:10) until that time came.

.....
: *2 Ch 6:32-33 As for the foreigner who does not belong to*
: *your people Israel but has come from a distant land*
: *because of your great name and your mighty hand and*
: *your outstretched arm — when he comes and prays toward*
: *this temple, then hear from heaven, your dwelling place,*
: *and do whatever the foreigner asks of you, so that all the*
: *peoples of the earth may know your name and fear you, as*
: *do your own people Israel, and may know that this house*
: *I have built bears your Name.*
:

How can you declare God’s truths to your neighbor? What can you do to declare the name of the Lord among the nations? Does one have to be an important person or have special training to proclaim the truth to others? (David started as a shepherd boy.)

Solomon included this truth of God’s concern for the nations in his prayer of dedication for the temple of God. He was granted wisdom to understand God’s Word and God’s purposes for Israel and the temple.

Does your worship of God help those of your neighborhood, your country, and people from other cultures and nations see God? What should you include in your worship to remind you that God wants to use you to reach the world with the Gospel? Should your worship include a time of prayer for those who do not know God? How would you include this?

Isaiah and Micah

The Lord is concerned about all the peoples of the earth. He is ready to seek them out wherever they are and no matter how far they have wandered. Isaiah had many words of judgment for the nations, but he also had words of hope. His words had great significance for people from nations and tribes he had never seen or even heard of. God was ready to

*Isa 55:5 Surely you will
summon nations you know not,
and nations that do not know you
will hasten to you, because of the
Lord your God, the Holy One of
Israel, for he has endowed you
with splendor.*

send out messengers to give them the truth so they would be able to come to God and know him.

Are you a citizen of one of the nations referred to by Isaiah

in the passage above? How did you learn about God? Discuss how God could use you to reach people of another culture or nation. What can you do to get the message of God's love to them? Are there people of another culture or nation in your community? How could you find them and give them God's message?

Micah helps us to see and understand that the people of the world are seeking the truth. What they need is someone to tell them. As they see the truth of God lived out in the lives of God's people, they will come to understand all that God has to offer.

Paul continues this theme in Acts 17 as he addresses the people of Athens. He presents to them the God who formed their nations and explains what his purpose was. He has established nations

Mic 4:2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.

so that man will seek him. You belong to one of the nations that God has established to proclaim his mission to the world.

Ac 17:26-27 From one man he made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live. God did this so that men would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.

What are you doing to help people in your nation find the truth of God? Does your church reach other nations with the truth? What programs could your church develop to reach other nations?



Lesson Three
The Revelation of the Plan

Key truth – God has clearly revealed his plan in the Old Testament.

Goal – That the student will understand the importance of reading God’s Word so he can be more effective in explaining God’s plan to others.

Scripture – Isaiah 7:14, 53:1-12, 61:1-2; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9

It is clear that from the beginning God has had a plan to restore man and reestablish the relationship he intended to have with him. This is God’s goal. To accomplish this, God prepared a way to deal with the sin that prevents this love relationship. God revealed the details of the plan to the prophets so that mankind would know what God was planning and when it would happen. There are over 300 different messages from God explaining the plan. We will look at just a few.

Details of Jesus’ Birth
Isaiah and Micah

In Isaiah we are given the information that the Messiah, God’s chosen one to implement his plan of saving the world,

.....
: *Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a* :
: *sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth* :
: *to a son, and will call him Immanuel.* :
.....

would be born of a virgin. We see the fulfillment of this in the choosing of Mary to give birth to Jesus.

In Micah we are told that this will happen in the small town of Bethlehem. In Luke we see how God used the political structure of the world to make sure Mary and Joseph are in Bethlehem when Jesus is born.

There are many more examples of how God revealed the details of his plan. These revelations, given many years before their fulfillment, help us understand the greatness of God and see more clearly what God is doing.

Mic 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

Discuss how this knowledge of God’s careful planning affects your ability or desire to share the gospel with others. What can you do to improve your ability to tell others about God’s plan?

Details of Jesus’ Life and Ministry Isaiah and Zechariah

Isaiah paints a vivid picture of the nature of Jesus’ life and ministry. Jesus himself uses this passage to describe why he has come and what he will be doing while he is on earth.

Isa 61:1-2 The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor...

Jesus’ ministry sprang from his great compassion for people who are suffering and in bondage. Everywhere he went he

preached the gospel and cared for the needs of the people to whom he spoke.

.....
: *Zec 9:9 Rejoice*
: *greatly, O*
: *Daughter of Zion!*
: *Shout, Daughter*
: *of Jerusalem! See,*
: *your king comes to*
: *you, righteous and*
: *having salvation,*
: *gentle and riding*
: *on a donkey, on a*
: *colt, the foal of a*
: *donkey.*
:

Zechariah also tells us that the focus of the plan would not be to set up an earthly kingdom among the nations. The kingdom of God would be based on peace and not conquest. Zechariah gives us a glimpse of the nature of this kingdom, and we see the fulfillment of his prophecy in Jesus' triumphal entry. Setting up a nation would have put many restrictions on God's plan. The plan was to save man, not to conquer man. By not tying his kingdom to any earthly nation, God enabled those who serve him to move freely

among all nations, proclaiming a kingdom and truth greater than any ruler or nation.

What rights do you have as a citizen? How can you use these rights to tell others about God's plan? Discuss how your citizenship in a country affects your ability to carry God's truth to the nations of the world. What affect do the laws of a country have on a person's ability to share God's message with those who have not heard?

**Crucifixion and Resurrection
Isaiah and Psalms**

The most complete picture of what God planned to do is found in Isaiah 53. Here we have a picture of God's plan to pay the price of our sin and offer forgiveness to all who come to Jesus. God will provide the sacrifice that will cover all of mankind's sin.

Reflect on this passage and consider the meaning of the word “all.” Who has sinned and who is being offered forgiveness? How should this information affect you and what you do? Who was pierced for your sin? What did his death do for you? Who else may benefit from what you have learned?

.....
: *Isa 53:1-12 He was despised and rejected by men, a*
: *man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Surely he*
: *took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we*
: *considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and*
: *afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he*
: *was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that*
: *brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we*
: *are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each*
: *of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has*
: *laid on him the iniquity of us all; for the transgression*
: *of my people he was stricken. By his knowledge my*
: *righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear*
: *their iniquities. For he bore the sin of many, and made*
: *intercession for the transgressors.*
:



Lesson Four

The Arrival – Angels, Shepherds and Magi.

Key truth – God has come to earth to give us his message personally.

Goal – That the student will know God’s promises are true and that he can confidently share the message with others.

Scriptures – Matthew 2, Luke 1-2

Angels play a significant role in announcing and caring for the arrival of the one who would carry out God’s plan. God wants everyone to clearly understand that the plan he has had since Adam and Eve sinned is now being fulfilled. The angels are used to reveal to key people that the time is now here.

Gabriel

On three occasions Gabriel comes to individuals before the birth of the Messiah. In each case he informs them of the part they will play in God’s plan. Mary is told she will give birth to the Messiah. Joseph is told that he is to marry and care for

<p><i>Lk 1:30-31 But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.</i></p>	<p>Mary and the child. Zechariah is told he and his wife will give birth to the prophet that will announce the</p>
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ministry of the Messiah. God lets people know exactly what their role will be.

Do you believe that God has a role for you to play in carrying the message of Jesus’ birth to the world? What do you think your role may be? Does everybody have the same role? If not, what are some possible roles people could have?

Shepherds –

The angels come to the shepherds to let them know that the blessing that God has promised has come and that this

<p><i>Lk 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.</i></p>	<p>blessing will be for all peoples. It does not matter what your social standing is or what you think of yourself. God wants everyone to know of his plan to bring peace between him and mankind.</p>
--	--

What was the social status of the shepherds? Is the work of proclaiming the gospel restricted to a certain economic or social class? How does your answer affect your involvement? Does the type of work you do or the role you have in society affect God’s desire for you to know his message of peace? So, if God wants everyone to have his message, and everyone who has it, to share it, with whom should you be sharing his message?

Magi –

God had promised to come and the Magi faithfully watched for the fulfillment of that promise. The Magi saw the star and came. When they saw the promised child, they honored him with gifts. They had made a long, difficult and expensive trip to recognize the arrival of the Messiah. God then warned them not to go back to Herod, and protected them so the message of Jesus’ birth would

<p>would be carried back to the people of their countries. Through the Magi, and in keeping with God’s promise, Jesus’ birth would be reported to the nations.</p>	<p><i>Mt 2:12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.</i></p>
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When someone fails to keep a promise, how do you feel? Compare that to how you feel when a person keeps their promise to you. What gift do you think God wants from you as a way of saying thank you to him for keeping his promise? What will you do so that others will hear about God's promise and how he kept it?



Lesson Five
The proclamation

Key truth – God intends for his message to be proclaimed throughout the world

Goal – That the student will understand that God expects everyone to be involved in the proclamation of his message to the world.

Scriptures – Matthew 5:13; Luke 24:7; John 3:16-17

Whenever there is a significant event or important news item, there is a proclamation made to explain and announce what is happening. Today we use newspapers, radio, television, and the internet as the means by which such information is shared with the world. In the days of Jesus, the only way for such news to be spread was for a person to travel around the region proclaiming the message. The government and leaders had special people assigned to this task and they would travel from place to place to spread the information. Jesus had to do the same thing. We, too, are expected to be involved in proclaiming the gospel.

Jesus' first sermon

From the beginning of Jesus' ministry, it was clear that his focus would be on our needs. This focus would fulfill his Father's plan to deal with the impact of sin in our lives and restore our relationship with God.

Jesus would travel throughout the region proclaiming this message of

Lk 4:19, 21 He has sent me ... to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

reconciliation. He would proclaim to all that the kingdom of heaven is near (Mt 4:17).

When you have good news, what do you do with it? What goals do you have for your life? Do your goals help you proclaim the gospel? Discuss how those goals help or hinder carrying the good news to the world.

Sermon on the Mount

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus begins to explain the focus of the message of the kingdom of God, and how it will affect the lives of the people who receive it. He then explains how our lives are to communicate this message to those around us. He calls us the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world.” Light is a symbol of the revelation of truth, and salt is a symbol of the preservation of the life of others so they will receive the message of hope.

.....
: *Mt 5:13, 14* :
: *You are the* :
: *salt of the* :
: *earth. You are* :
: *the light of the* :
: *world.* :
:
:

Jesus says we are to be a light for the world. Is your life a light that reveals the truth to others? How does your life attract or repel others to the gospel? Discuss what it means to be salt for others.

Nicodemus

Nicodemus comes to Jesus in the evening. He wants to learn more about Jesus’ message and how to belong to the kingdom of God. Jesus is glad for the opportunity to explain what must happen in a person’s life. It is in this passage that Jesus sums up the entire purpose of God’s mission and what each of us must do to become part of God’s family. He tells us of God’s love and forgiveness and the price God will pay

for man's salvation. He also makes it very clear that this is for everyone in the world and not just a select group.

In 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

Share how you became a part of God's family. In what ways have you experienced God's love in your life? How can you show God's love to others? Do the life and the activities of your church reflect God's love for the world and his desire to save all who believe? Discuss how they do or don't.



Lesson Six
The Cross

Key truth – Jesus’ death on the cross is the source of our salvation and the heart of the gospel.

Goal – That the student will not be ashamed of the gospel and will gladly share it with others.

Scripture – Luke 24:7; 1 Corinthians 1:18; 1 John 2:2

In the process of making an important decision, one always arrives at the critical point of having to choose to move forward or to remain where one is. In offering salvation to all mankind, Jesus had a critical decision to make. He chose to die on the cross and pay for the sin of the whole world. The cross is the focal point for missions. Without the cross, we have no message and nothing to offer the world. With the cross, we have the powerful evidence of God’s great love for them and for us.

Reason

<i>Lk 24:7 The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.</i>	We ask the question, “why?” about many aspects of our lives. It is natural that we would want to know the reason for the cross. There had to be a reason for the sacrifice of Jesus’ life in this way. The nature of sin is the reason. Sin creates a debt we cannot pay. Only the one who has no debt can make the payment, and it must be given willingly. Jesus came and died willingly to free us from the debt we could not pay. That is the message of missions. God has provided payment for the debt of all who have sinned.
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How does it feel to be in debt? What is it like when a debt is finally paid in full? Think about how you would feel if someone paid your debts for you. How can you help people at home and around the world have their spiritual debt paid?

Impact

When Israel was first given the law by Moses, it quickly became clear that no one was able to keep that law. It also became clear that the sin revealed by the law would prevent people from coming near to God. As a result, each person would have to make a yearly sacrifice for their sin. This would have to be repeated year after year. Sin and its forgiveness became an incredible burden for each person to deal with.

Jesus' sacrifice is a one-time event. It does not have to be repeated over and over again. We are freed from the burden of our sin and the constant requirement to pay for that sin. We no longer are captive to sin and isolated from God.

.....
: *1 Jn 2:2 He is the atoning* :
: *sacrifice for our sins, and* :
: *not only for ours but also* :
: *for the sins of the whole* :
: *world.* :
:

When something good happens, we are quick to tell others about it. Why? Is the day Jesus forgave you a secret or something you would share with others? Do you? Why or why not?

Message

The cross is the message. It contains all the truth of the gospel. It is the evidence of God's love and the proof that God's promises are true. Paul says that he is not ashamed of the gospel (Ro 1:16). It is the message of the cross and it will overcome the world. Without the cross there is no message,

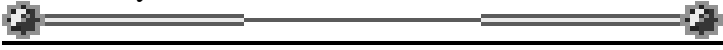
there is no forgiveness,
there is no hope. The
message is simple, Jesus
Christ, crucified (on the
cross). But it does not end
there. Jesus Christ is risen,
revealing his victory over
the cross and the sin it

.....
: *1 Co 1:18 For the message*
: *of the cross is foolishness*
: *to those who are perishing,*
: *but to us who are being*
: *saved it is the power of*
: *God.*
:

represents. The cross becomes not a symbol of death but a
symbol of life. It is the empty cross that reveals the truth of
the message God has given to the world. It is the empty cross
that reveals to us the fulfilled promise of forgiveness and
restoration.

Today let the cross stand clearly before you. Let the cross
proclaim its message to the world through you. Today let
God use you to reach his world with the gospel.

Share with the class what the cross means to you. Why
would you be afraid to tell that to others? How can you
overcome your fear?



Lesson Seven
The need for workers

Key truth – God wants all of us to use the abilities we have to be workers in the harvest.

Goal – That the student will see how he can help with the harvest wherever he is.

Scripture – Matthew 9:36-38; Luke 19:10; Acts 1:8

No job will be completed without workers to do it. Every job requires many kinds of workers with different kinds of skills. Having the right people in the right place means the job will be done, and done well. A harvest requires many people with many skills to

Mt 9:38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."

complete it. If only one person is working, it will take a long time to get the job done and many parts of the task may not be done as well as they could be. God wants workers. Jesus tells us to pray that God will send workers.

The work

The work of carrying the gospel to the world requires people with many different kinds of skills and gifts: people who will effectively communicate to us the needs around the world, teachers who will teach us from God's Word about his immense love for all, givers who will supply the resources needed to reach those who have not heard, intercessors who will pray earnestly for missionaries and their work. Some workers will be required to meet the specific needs of individual missionaries and of the people who will hear the gospel through them. And, of course, there is always a need for people who will go. The more we

understand the work God has given us, the better we will understand how we can help get the gospel to the world.

What are some of the needs of people around us? How can meeting those needs be a way to share the gospel with them? What skills do you have that can be used to fill one of those needs and help others hear the gospel? Consider how being a committed Christian where you are helps others in the harvest.

The location

Getting to your place of employment requires knowing the location and having directions to get there. Some employers have a base from which they send people out to other locations to work. Some employers send people to get special training or provide specialized help in getting a job done.

Ac 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

In these situations, some people must be faithfully doing their job at home so that those who are sent out will have the necessary support to do their assigned work. The church is much the same. There is work to be done at the church and outside of the church. This is what Jesus is telling the disciples. The work of telling others the gospel is not restricted to one place and one group of people.

Discuss how the ministry of your church can reach out to others near and far. Make a list of your neighbors. Make a list of cities near you that represent Judea. Make a list of groups that are outcasts or disliked by society that are in your community. Make a list of countries you have contact with in

someway. Look at each list and discuss how your class can reach someone on each list.

Lost sheep

A key part of the work that is being given to us involves reaching people who do not know they are lost. They may know something is missing, but they do not know what. Our task in the harvest is not just to present the gospel, but to find those who need to hear it. Jesus tells us that a good shepherd will do whatever is necessary to find those that are missing or lost (Mt 18:12). Without someone to go in search of them, they will remain lost.

.....
: *Lk 19:10 For the Son* :
: *of Man came to seek* :
: *and to save what* :
: *was lost.* :
.....

Have you ever been lost? What did it take for you to discover where you were and how did you get directions to where you wanted to be? What is our role then in finding those who are lost? Where should we go to find them and what will it take for us to go?



Lesson Eight
The authority

Key truth – We have the authority to go to the world to teach, disciple and baptize those who believe.

Goal – That the student will understand the importance of being involved in teaching, discipleship and baptism.

Scripture – Matthew 28:18-20; John 13:35, 20:31; Romans 6:4

It is important to understand what gives us the right to go into the world and tell others about the gospel. Many are concerned about whether we have the right to tell others that they are sinful and will perish without Christ. Jesus answers this concern as he prepares to ascend to heaven. God has given Jesus all authority and he, in turn, has given us the right to carry this message to the world.

.....
: *Mt 28:18 All authority in*
: *heaven and on earth has*
: *been given to me. 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, and teaching*
: *them to obey everything I*
: *have commanded you.*
:

Teach

Jesus tells the disciples to teach others all that they have learned. Their responsibility would be to remember all they have received from the Master and then tell others those truths. It meant having the authority to set up the structures by which these truths would be communicated to others. The Gospels are a result of that process. The Epistles are another step in the process. Paul is concerned throughout his letters that teaching be done. The most important thing is to teach the gospel.

In 20:31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Why is God concerned that we teach others? Discuss whether there are structures in your church that teach people about missions and how they can be involved. Discuss how you can help teach others what you have learned in this class. Consider also who you can teach.

Disciple

We are told that it is our responsibility to do more than just give people the gospel. We are to encourage them to grow in their relationship with God. We are to help them understand how their relationship with God is a witness to others. The closer we are to God, the more effective we will be in helping others hear the truth and believe. Jesus tells the disciples that the world will know they are Christians by the love they have for each other (Jn 13:35). The life those early Christians lived was a major factor in their ability to witness and draw others to the truth.

In 13:35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

Why is it important to grow in your relationship with God? How does your life in the world affect others? Are you involved in helping others to grow in Christ? How?

Baptize

Following Christ requires commitment - a commitment that others will see. We can teach them, and we can show them our Christian walk, but at some point each person will have

to make a choice regarding what he or she has been taught. This will not be a private decision made in secret. It must be made in the presence of others. We have the responsibility to help people see that receiving the gospel is a choice, and that choice, made in the presence of others, will bring them into the fellowship of God's family.

.....
: *Ro 6:4 We were therefore*
: *buried with him through*
: *baptism into death in order*
: *that, just as Christ was*
: *raised from the dead*
: *through the glory of the*
: *Father, we too may live a*
: *new life.*
:

Describe how you felt when you were baptized. How did that affect the people around you? Why is it important to publicly tell others you are a Christian?



Lesson Nine

The focus

Key truth –God has given us the responsibility to carry the gospel to the world.

Goal – That the student will understand his responsibility to be a witness to those who have not heard.

Scripture – Matthew 25:40; Mark 16:15; Luke 14:13-14; Acts 1:8

The world is a very large place. What part are we responsible for? This question was answered for us in Acts 1:8. Jesus tells us that we are responsible for those close to us, those nearby, those we don't like or are afraid of, and those located everywhere in the world. It is a challenging task and can be overwhelming, but when we keep our eyes on Jesus and work as he directs us, we can handle the responsibility that has been given to us.

Ac 1:8 you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem , and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Jerusalem

There are people right where we are that need to hear the gospel. They are people we work with, go to school with, and do business with. Often they are family members. They are in need. Jesus tells us that those who truly follow him

Lk 14:13-14 But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.

care about those around them. They take time to feed them, supply their needs and care for them in the difficult

times of their lives. Before we can reach a person in a far away country, we need to begin reaching the person right next to us.

Do we see the people next to us as ones who desperately need to hear the gospel? How have you shown God’s love to them this week? What are some ways that you can do this? Discuss what needs to change in your life so that you will show God’s love to those who are a part of your life and share the gospel with them.

Judea/Samaria

These two groups are often missed when we think about proclaiming the gospel to the world. In the next city or area are people who need to hear. We often think that they are the responsibility of those who live there. This may be true, but that does not mean we cannot help. It does not mean we should not pray. Sometimes we need to go to a nearby city and help those who are trying to reach the lost there.

.....
: *Mt 25:40 The King will* :
: *reply, 'I tell you the truth,* :
: *whatever you did for one of* :
: *the least of these brothers of* :
: *mine, you did for me.*5:36 :
:
:

The other group is the people we are afraid to deal with or we try to ignore. Many people will say this group is beyond the reach of the gospel. They are the outcasts of society, the criminals and unlovely. Yet Jesus took special time to deal with just this type of people. He met the lepers, and he forgave the thief on the cross and the adulterous woman. He cared for them and sought them out so they, too, could hear the gospel.

Identify an area or group in your community that is your Judea or Samaria. Why do these people make you afraid? What changes will you have to make in your attitude to be

able to reach them with the gospel? What changes will your church need to make?

World

Beyond our borders are people that need to hear the gospel. It will not be easy to reach them. They speak different languages and have different customs. They are part of the world that God has created and he tells us over and over that

.....	:	he loves and cares for them as
: <i>Mk 16:15 Go into all</i>	:	well. Jesus called them his other
: <i>the world and</i>	:	sheep (Jn 10:16). He says that he
: <i>preach the good news</i>	:	will bring them also into the
: <i>to all creation.</i>	:	kingdom. They will hear his voice.
.....	:	Jesus clearly commanded us to go

to the entire world with the gospel (Mk 16:15).

Discuss what you and your church need to do to be part of carrying the gospel to the world.



Lesson Ten
The method

Key truth – God has only one method for telling others his plan and that is to use us.

Goal – That the student will believe God can use him to tell others the gospel.

Scripture – Mark 4:33; Romans 14:17;
1 Corinthians 9:22

There are various methods and programs for doing evangelism. Each of them includes a plan for training people in how to effectively reach those who have not heard the gospel. Many of these programs are great and very useful but they all rely on one central method - you and your life. God has chosen to work through you and me to reach the world. No matter what program is used, it requires individuals to make it work. Regardless what program or plan is used, there are three key areas to keep in focus.

Know who you are

We need to understand our culture in the light of God's word. It is important that we first recognize what is good and what is not good about our own culture and country. This will help us identify areas where we must change, and in changing be able to reach out to the people around us. Jesus became a part of the culture of first century Palestine. He understood it and was able to communicate effectively within it.

Mk 4:33 With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand.

Why did you become a Christian? What did others do to help you understand the gospel and believe it was true?

Know who they are

This is a significant part of Paul’s mission. He states that he will become all things to all people so that he can win them to Christ. Paul spent his life going to the nations with the gospel. There are several key passages that talk about issues that arose because he was preaching in another culture. These are found in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8. The principles and guidelines found in these chapters will be very helpful as we move around the world.

What are the needs of the people who live around you? Do people of other cultures and countries have the same basic needs, i.e. need for food, housing, security, and so on? How can these similarities help us to communicate with people of different countries and cultures?

.....
Ro 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit
.....

The Goal

The reason for knowing who we are and who they are is so that we will learn how to

.....
1 Co 9:22 I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.
.....

effectively communicate the gospel to others. This was the focus of Paul’s life and ministry. He sought to understand the people and do all he could to enter into their life so that he could communicate the gospel. As he did this he was careful not to deny the law of God

in his life. His goal was to be an example of Christ living among them so that they would be able to respond.

Are there attitudes and actions in your life that could be changed so that others will see God more clearly? What kind of changes do you think would need to occur in the church to reach people from another culture? Make a list and discuss them.



Lesson Eleven

The risks

Key truth – There will be opposition to the gospel, but God will be with us to give us strength.

Goal – That the student will understand the cost of following Jesus and proclaiming the gospel.

Scripture – Matthew 6:20-21; Luke 12:11-12; John 15:20-21; Acts 4:8-14

Everything we do in life involves a certain amount of risk. Marriage and family involve many risks. We must trust our lives to others and believe they will help us and not hurt us. Every type of work has related risks. The games we play often carry the potential for risk. Just riding in a car or walking down the street puts us at risk from others or from our own actions. Life is about taking risks. We will not have much of a life if we are unwilling to take risks. Proclaiming the gospel is no different. It requires taking some risks.

Separation

.....
: *Mt 6:20-21 But store*
: *up for yourselves*
: *treasures in heaven,*
: *where moth and rust do*
: *not destroy, and where*
: *thieves do not break in*
: *and steal. For where*
: *your treasure is, there*
: *your heart will be also.*
:

To reach the world will require us to leave behind much that we possess and find desirable in our lives. It might mean being separated from our family and friends. It could mean letting go of the possessions we have in order to be free to go. It may mean leaving behind a place where we are secure and known to go

to a place that is dangerous and filled with the unknown. Jesus challenged the people to leave behind their family and

possessions to follow him and find a greater reward - a reward that would be waiting for them in heaven. He told the disciples that they would be repaid a hundred times for everything they left behind.

Why would it be hard for you to leave home and go to another country to share the gospel? What will you need to let go of in order to reach the world? What do we do that makes it hard for others to go? Discuss what we need to let go of so others can go.

Opposition

When we decide to reach out to the world, we soon discover that there are people who oppose outreach. To care about the world may result in our family rejecting or criticizing our actions. It may result in criticism from those who think our actions are foolish and wasteful. Even when we arrive in our new place of service, there will be people who do not want us there and who will oppose all of our efforts to share the gospel with them. We will find ourselves isolated and attacked for our faith. We need to be prepared for the opposition that will come.

In 15:20-21 If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

What do you think it means to suffer for your faith? Discuss how opposition affects you. How will it affect those who are sent? What can be done to strengthen those who face opposition?

Death

There is always the possibility that our lives will be at risk for sharing the gospel. It does not matter if you stay at home or go to another country. There will always be those who hate the truth and will seek to bring harm to those who follow God. Satan will do all he can to encourage the opposition and

silence the truth. Satan helped bring about the death of Jesus. Stephen was stoned to death. Many others have died while

Lk 12:11-12 do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.

Ac 4:8-14 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!

If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.'

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

taking the gospel to those who need to hear it. God knows this and is ready to provide the strength to proclaim the truth. God has a special place for those who give their lives so that the world will know of God's love.

Are we ready to go? Are we ready to let others go, even when we know the risk? Do we trust God to care for those who go? Has your life ever been in danger? Explain. What would it take for you to be willing to go to a place that is dangerous? What would it take to share your faith in that place?



Lesson Twelve
The future Glory

Key truth – God will gather those who believe, from all the nations, to join together in worship.

Goal – That the student will understand that what he does here has an impact on who will be present there, and that God wants to use him to help other people be a part of that time of worship.

Scripture – Isaiah 49:6; Revelation 7:9-10

Do we know why we do what we do? We get a job so that we will have the resources to provide food, clothing, shelter and other benefits for ourselves and our families. We join various groups so that we will be able to enjoy the company of others. We get married so that we will have someone to share our life with. We usually have some idea of the benefits that will be gained from the things we do. It is the hope of obtaining these benefits that motivates our decisions. The gospel has a purpose with clear benefits. God knows what he wants to happen and what the result will be.

The goal – the ends of the earth

The focus of God’s mission is that the message of salvation be carried to the ends of the earth. Jesus did not come just to save the people of Israel. His salvation is for all the nations. We, here in this place, are believers in Jesus because of those who have heard God’s call and have

.....
: *Isa 49:6 "It is too small*
: *a thing for you to be my*
: *servant to restore the tribes*
: *of Jacob and bring back*
: *those of Israel I have*
: *kept. I will also make you*
: *a light for the Gentiles,*
: *that you may bring my*
: *salvation to the ends of the*
: *earth."*
:

traveled to the ends of the earth searching for the lost. Now it is our responsibility and privilege to continue the work of carrying the light of salvation to those who have not heard today. We must go to the ends of the earth with the gospel.

Do we know where the ends of the earth are today? Do we know who has not heard at home, in our region, and in the world? What do we need to do to increase our knowledge about those who have not heard so that we can reach them?

The gathering

The day will come when we will get to see the results of the work of those who have heard God's call to mission and have gone out to reach the world. There will come a time when we will see how our giving has helped others to hear. We will see how our prayers made it possible for the gospel

to be shared. We will understand how our lives have helped others find Jesus. There will come a day when God will gather us all, and we will join with those from all the nations in praise to God.

.....
: *Re 7:9-10 After this I looked and there before me was a* :
: *great multitude that no one could count, from every nation,* :
: *tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and* :
: *in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and* :
: *were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried* :
: *out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits* :
: *on the throne, and to the Lamb.* :
:
:

We have the opportunity to be a part of this great assembly and to make it possible for people from all over the earth to join us.

Discuss what it will be like to worship together at Jesus' feet. What will it be like to learn about those who have heard the good news because you obeyed God's call to go and tell it to everyone?



Lesson Thirteen
Pray, Give, Go

Key truth – We are being called by God to get involved in his mission to reach the world with the gospel.

Goal – That the student will decide to answer yes to God’s call.

Scriptures – Matthew 9:37-38; John 17:20; Acts 8:5, 8-40; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Philippians 4:10-18;

Getting involved is not always easy, especially when we are not sure how to go about it. We want to know what will be required of us and what commitments we must make. We are interested in how others have been involved and what the results have been. We want to know the various ways we can be involved and at what level.

Prayer

Jesus was committed to the mission God had given him and concerned about those who would be a part of that mission both while he was present and after he returned to heaven. One of the key things he did was to pray for those who would follow him and for those who would hear the message through them.

In 17:20 My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message,

He instructed his disciples that they, too, should pray that God would provide what they would need to carry the gospel to the world. We, Jesus’ modern day disciples, are responsible to pray for the work of evangelism. Jesus tells us to pray that God will send more workers. We can also pray for those who go and for those who will hear.

Who do you pray for each day in your family, in your community, in your country and in the world? Make a list of people who are missionaries. Discuss how you can pray for them and for the work they are doing?

Mt 9:38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

How can you become more effective in interceding for them?

Give

Paul spends time discussing the issue of giving in 2 Corinthians 8-9. He praises those who give to provide for the needs of others. In Philippians he tells us about a church that was very important to his ministry. They gave generously from their resources to support him in the work he was doing. Paul tells us about three levels of giving. The first is our tithe. This is what God expects us to do. The second is sacrificial giving. This requires making choices about our

2 Co 8:3-4 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

lifestyle and about what God wants us to do with our money. It may mean giving up something so that others will have the resources they need to share the gospel with those who have not heard. The third level is called faith giving. This is giving what I do not have but believe God will provide as I trust him. God has abundant resources. He is looking for people who will exercise their faith by trusting God to supply the money for them to give.

Are you tithing your resources to God? What happens when we give our tithe? Have you ever given up something so that you could give more to God's work? What happened when you did? Have you ever given money you did not have believing that God would supply it? What changes will you make in order to raise the level of your giving, so that you give both sacrificially and by faith, believing that God will supply?

Go

God is always calling individuals to go and do the work, people who will go to their neighbor, to those they do not like or are afraid of, to other parts of the country or to another country and culture. God is looking for those who are listening for his direction and are ready to go where he leads. Philip was one of those people. His first assignment was to wait on tables and be sure everyone had what they needed (Ac 6:3-5). When we next see Philip, he is in Samaria ministering to a group that was hated by the Jews (Ac 8:5). Then we see him on a lonely road waiting for the Ethiopian (Ac 8:26). Finally God sends him into Caesarea to

Ac 8:5 Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there.

Ac 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Mt 28:19-20 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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

share the gospel with anyone he meets (Ac 8:40). We too, are called to go. Will we listen?

Has God ever told you to go to a person and share the gospel with them? What happened? What can you do this week to go, or help someone else go, so they can share the gospel at home? In another country?