



SESSION 8
MISSIONS

Why Missions?

¹ Oh sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth! ² Sing to the LORD, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. ³ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples! ⁴ For great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; he is to be feared above all gods.

Psalm 96:1-4

⁵ Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you. ⁶ I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Do not withhold; bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, ⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

Isaiah 43:5-7

⁹ “For my name's sake I defer my anger; for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. ¹⁰ Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. ¹¹ For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

Isaiah 48:9-11

And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life.

Matthew 19:29

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

¹ Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, ² which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy Scriptures, ³ concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh ⁴ and was declared to be the Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, ⁵ through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations...

Romans 1:1-5

⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:9-11

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

⁹ After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

Revelation 7:9-10

Reasons for Missions

1. The glory of God:

⁴ In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. ⁵ For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. ⁶ For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4-6

2. The joy of all peoples.

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Psalm 16:11

Ashland Church Mission Statement

We exist to treasure and spread a passion for the supremacy of Christ in all things for the joy of all peoples.

Recommended Resource | *Let the Nations be Glad* by John Piper

Group Discussion Questions:

Why does the reason for missions matter? What would change about how we think about and go about missions if we had a man-centered motivation instead of a God-centered motivation?

What is Missions?

“If everything is mission, then nothing is mission.” - Stephen Neill, *Creative Tension*

“Mission, missions, missionary, missional, and missiology have a common root in the word missio, which derives from the Latin word ‘mitto,’ meaning ‘to send.’ ”

Pratt, Sills, and Walters | *Introduction to Global Missions*

“The Latin verb mittere corresponds to the Greek verb apostellein, which occurs 136 times in the New Testament (97 times in the Gospels, used both for Jesus having been ‘sent’ by God and for the Twelve being ‘sent’ by Jesus.)”

Eckhard Schnabel, *Paul the Missionary*

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem” (local witness) “and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (global witness).

Acts 1:8

Local Witness

Evangelism - the proclamation of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit with the aim of persuading people to repent and believe in Christ. (Luke 24:47, John 16:8–11, Acts 1:8, 2 Corinthians 5:11)

International Mission Board, Foundations

Global Witness

Missions - the Spirit-empowered work of the local church to fulfill the Great Commission by crossing significant cultural, geographic, and/or linguistic boundaries to make disciples of all nations through planting local churches.

The Great Commission

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation.”

Mark 16:15

⁴⁶ ...and said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, ⁴⁷ and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. ⁴⁸ You are witnesses of these things.”

Luke 24:46-48

Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”

John 20:21

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

Acts 1:8

Missions Vision at Ashland

Making disciples of all nations by planting healthy churches where they do not exist and strengthening churches where they do exist for the purpose of planting churches where they do not exist.

Recommended Resource | *Missions: How the Local Church Goes Global* by Andy Johnson

Group Discussion Questions:

What is the problem with a broad definition of missions? Why is it helpful to have a biblical definition of missions?

What are some ways you are involved or will get involved in making the gospel known locally and globally?

Who Does Missions?

I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18

The mission of making disciples of all nations belongs to Jesus Christ. He is ultimately responsible for it, he is ultimately in control of it, and he will ultimately complete it.

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

The Role of the Local Church

It is the privilege and duty of the local church to be involved in the mission of Jesus Christ. The mission has been given to the local church.

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 3:8-10

The local church is the missions team. The Great Commission is not an option for some Christians to consider, but for the entire church to obey.

Under Christ, the local church has the primary responsibility to fulfill the Great Commission. Therefore, the local church has the primary role in missions. The local church is the means and end of missions.

The Local Church Trains

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

Ephesians 4:11-13

The Local Church Sends

¹ Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ Then after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts 13:1-3

The Local Church Holds Accountable

²⁶ ...and from there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work that they had fulfilled. ²⁷ And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. ²⁸ And they remained no little time with the disciples.

Acts 14:26–28

The Local Church Prays

¹ Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, ² and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.

2 Thessalonians 3:1–2

Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; [38] therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

Matthew 9:37–38

The Local Church Gives

⁵ Beloved, it is a faithful thing you do in all your efforts for these brothers, strangers as they are, ⁶ who testified to your love before the church. You will do well to send them on their journey in a manner worthy of God. ⁷ For they have gone out for the sake of the name, accepting nothing from the Gentiles. ⁸ Therefore we ought to support people like these, that we may be fellow workers for the truth.

3 John 5–8

The Role of the Missionary

For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”

Rom 10:13–15

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. ¹⁴ For the body does not consist of one member but of many...¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14, 18-20

Is Every Christian a Missionary?

“Every Christian is either a missionary or an imposter.”

Charles Spurgeon

, if you mean (broadly) every Christian is a witness of Jesus Christ who is responsible to share the gospel, make disciples, and play their part in the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

, if you mean (narrowly) every Christian is sent out from a local church across cultural, geographic, and/or linguistic boundaries as a witness of Jesus Christ to fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples of all nations through planting local churches.

Missionary - a qualified Christian sent by a local church across significant cultural, geographic, and/or linguistic boundaries to fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples of all nations through planting local churches.

Recommended Resource | *Should I Be a Missionary?* by Andy Johnson

Group Discussion Questions:

How should the role of the local church in missions affect our involvement in missions?

How should the role of the missionary affect how we support and raise up missionaries?

When Of Missions?

Recommended Resource | “Ashland Men 2023 Session 8” by Pastor Jeremy Haskins (<https://www.ashland.church/ministries/ashland-men/theology-of-manhood/#session8>)

Where and How Do We Do Missions

Missions - the Spirit-empowered work of the local church to fulfill the Great Commission by crossing significant cultural, geographic, and/or linguistic boundaries to make disciples of all nations through planting local churches.

We plant healthy churches where they do not exist and strengthen churches where they do exist for the purpose of planting churches where they do not exist.

Church - a local gathering of Christians who covenant together to glorify God by submitting to the preaching of His Word and by practicing the ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

Why is Church Planting the Goal of Missions?

- God’s Glory is Manifested Through the Church (Ephesians 3:8-10, Matthew 5:14-16)
- Obedience to Christ’s command - the command to make disciples, baptize, and teach is ultimately fulfilled in the local church (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Example of the Apostles - the book of Acts records how the Apostles fulfilled the Great Commission by planting churches.

How Do We Do Missions Faithfully?

1. Relying on God
2. Being Centered on His Word
3. Through the Local Church
4. Preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ
5. Discipling in the Context of the Local Church
6. Planting Healthy Churches
7. Persevering Patiently

How To Be Involved Now

- Encourage Faithful Mission Work and Missionaries (Current and Future)
 - Fathers must lead the way
 - *Raising Kids with a Heart for Missions* by Daniel Akin
 - Missionary Documentaries
 - (www.ashland.church/missionsresources)
- Ashland Missions Training - annually in March
- CrossCon - Go or send 18 to 25-year-olds (www.crosscon.com)
- Share the Gospel
 - Resource | Two Ways to Live tracts
- Make Disciples
 - *Discipling* by Mark Dever
 - How Do I Disciple Others? by Garrett Kell
- Pray
 - Ends of the Earth Prayer Calendars
 - www.ashland.church/pray
 - Unreached of the Day App
<https://joshuaproject.net/pray/unreachedoftheday/app>
- Give
 - www.ashland.church/give
- Go - NOLA, Peru, Ends of the Earth
 - Go Guide
 - www.ashland.church/go
 - Summer Missions Grant for 18 to 25 year old Ashland Church members:
www.ashland.church/missiongrant

For More on Missions:

- www.ashland.church/missions
- www.ashland.church/missionsresources/
 - Books, Kids Books
 - Documentaries, Movies, Shows
 - Apps and Podcasts
- <https://www.missionary.com/>
- Ashland Missions Convictions & Definitions

HOMEWORK

Are you following Jesus? | ashland.church/essentials

All followers of Jesus are commanded to make disciples. Obedience to this command occurs naturally when we take following Christ seriously each day.

The local church is the God ordained means for lifelong discipleship. You benefit from the gifts of other disciple makers while you use your gifts to make disciples.

What next step will you take to engage in intentional discipleship?

Who will you call to follow you as you follow Jesus?

Are you a witness? | ashland.church/witness

How are you embracing your identity as a witness?

How are you telling the truth about Jesus ...where your feet are?

How can you cultivate the habit of consistently sharing the gospel?

QUESTIONS TO ASK UNBELIEVERS

- Do you have any spiritual beliefs?
- To you, who is Jesus?
- If you died, where would you go?
- Why should God allow you into heaven?
- Would you like to know what the Bible says?
- Can I tell you how the truth of Jesus changed my life?

List 3 people you will commit to praying for as you look for opportunities to share the gospel, invite to church, and sacrificially serve in Jesus' name.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What night of the week each month will you invite friends and or family over to your home for the purpose of gospel conversations?

How can your family (or roommates) use your home for the sake of the gospel?

Are you going? | ashland.church/go

What mission trips will you commit to in the next year?

What mission trips will you go on with your family in the next year?

What trips will you make sure others in your family are going on in the next year?

Have you ever considered serving as a missionary long-term? If yes, be sure to talk to one of your pastors about your desire.

Are you praying? | ashland.church/pray

When will your family pray for our church planting efforts in New Orleans, Peru, and other ends of the earth efforts (in the morning, at dinner, etc)? (see Ends of the Earth prayer calendar)

When will your family pray for unreached peoples? (See Unreached of the Day app or joshuaproject.org)

Are you giving? | ashland.church/give

Ashland Giving Strategy

- General (10% tithe): _____
- Ends of Earth (December offering): _____
- Other : Abba Fund, Benevolence Fund:_____

How will you lead your family to sacrificially give to missions?

What are other ways you can creatively steward your finances to give toward the work of missions? (e.g. start a savings account for personal mission trips and to give to specifically send others.)

Are you encouraging? | ashland.church/missionsresources

How will you encourage yourself and your family to be involved in missions? (e.g. attend our Ashland Missions Training - March, watch missions movies/documentaries, read missions books and biographies, communicate with missionaries, etc)

For Young Men

“Is there a more heroic test for the powers of manhood than pioneer work in the mission field?”

Samuel Zwemer (1867-1952), Missionary to Middle East

“The ratio of women to men on the mission field right now is 2:1. Two thirds of missionaries serving are married couples. The other 70-80% are single women.”

Paul Akin, Provost SBTS
former Dean of Billy Graham School of
Mission and Church Planting

“A young man should ask of himself not if it’s his duty to go to the heathen but if he may dare stay at home.”

Lottie Moon (1840-1912), Missionary to China.

Why are you not considering the mission field?

How are you intentionally using your life right now for the sake of the gospel around the world?

How are you planning right now to go or to strategically invest in the sending of others?

How will your plans for school debt impact your decision to go?

Do your plans for marriage and family include the possibility of going to the mission field?

How are you ordering your life here so that you might be effective there one day?