



Sent by God: His People on His Mission

LESSON 3: Sent Forth to Reflect His Glory

Emerging Missional Themes

God has a purpose for his church. God has a purpose for this church. Understanding God's purpose for this church has powerful and sometimes uncomfortable implications for how we accomplish our ministry and mission.

Five foundational missional concepts have emerged from our first two weeks of class. We will study them one by one over the next five weeks. They represent our attempt to answer the question, "What does God send us forth to do?"

Worship. We are a worshipping community. We seek to exalt God. He is the focus of all we are and do. A high point of our shared life is the time we spend together each week before the throne of God.

Grow. The church is a place where people are nurtured in faith and encouraged to grow spiritually. As we grow into mature disciples, we learn how to imitate Jesus and reflect Him into the world.

Encourage. This church is committed to bringing believers into the body of Christ through meaningful connections.

Proclaim. This church has a heart for evangelism and missions. We want people everywhere to hear the story of Christ. We want to share the story.

Serve. We believe God intends this church to touch and serve its community. We do this as we respond to human needs and problems.

We will study these in the order they appear above.

Worship

We usually think of worship as something we do while we are at the church building. We too seldom think of worship as something we go forth to do as God sends us into our communities and our world.

In worship we exalt God. We declare his majesty and glory. One purpose of worship is to magnify God. Worship is an essential part of the Christian life, and is not limited to Sundays when we assemble together as the body of Christ. In worship we identify and accept the values that guide our lives, and the life of the church. Worship solidifies shared beliefs, values, and purposes. Worship is also a source of power in the life of a Christian during the week.

One reason we study worship first in this series is because focusing on God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is at the center of the Christian faith and life.

Worship—a Brief Word Study

Sometimes the word 'worship' in the Bible is translated as 'serve' (Matt. 4:7). Worship is a priestly act. We present our bodies sacrificially as a spiritual act of worship (Rom. 12:1-2).

Worship is intentional. No one worships accidentally. Worship extends beyond the walls of the church building, but we should stop short of declaring that "all of life is worship." Worship includes many different actions, and when we limit worship to certain actions or a certain place and time, we limit our personal relationship with God.

In the Bible, worship is both individual and shared.

What examples of individual worship can you think of? Shared worship experiences should never replace individual worship. Prayer (talking to God), study (listening to God), meditation and silence (thinking about or contemplating God) are part of our lives as we go forth into the world where God is sending us.

The phrase, 'worship service' does not appear in the Bible and is in one sense trite. Why?

