

Be Missional

Three Week Small Group Series on the Great Commission

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

Matthew 28:19-20





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Requests for information regarding Southland Church ministry should be addressed to:

Southland Church
190 PTH 52 W
Box 219 Steinbach, Manitoba, Canada, R5G 1M2
204.326.9020
info@mysouthland.com
www.mysouthland.com

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Instructions for the Study

A thematic study is a great discipleship tool. This Study has been designed to have two main components each week. We recommend that you take eight weeks to complete the study (one session per week), but feel free to adapt as needed.

1. Personal Study at Home (including study notes)
2. Small Group Session (optional)

The Personal study at home allows the participant to reflect on the Bible themes and passages at home and work through personal application questions on their own. Then, the person comes to the small group meeting ready to share what God has already been showing them.

The small group conversations and discussions are useful in diving deeper into the topic and seeing things from a different perspective or helping you see something that you may have missed when studying the topic at home on your own.

Doing a thematic study can be very simple. Just follow the template given for each session and make sure that each member of your group has a copy of this booklet so they can journal their responses and come to the small group meeting ready to share. This helps the small group time stay focused and gives everyone an opportunity to think through what they would like to share, adding value to the small group time.

If you have any questions about facilitating this Bible Study, give the church office a call. Someone from Cell Ministry would be happy to speak to you.

Session One: All Places are Mission Fields

Part One: Personal Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting.

1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

2. Read: Session 1 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

3. Personal Reflection Questions

- Read Ephesians 1:3-23. What does Paul say about God's mission, goal, or purpose? Take special note of verse 4, 10, 12.
- Read Matt. 22:36-40 (Great Commandment) and Matt. 28:18-20 (Great Commission). How does the cultural trend of isolating interfere with these commands?
- Who are the people in your life and what are the areas in your life where you can grow in being more missional?

4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this material into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week's Bible passage and memorize it.

Part Two: Study Notes – All Places are Mission Fields

- **Matthew 28:19-20** ¹⁹ *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,* ²⁰ *and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*
- The word “mission” comes to us from a Latin word meaning “to send off.”
- In the Great Commission, believers are sent off to do these main tasks – go, disciple, baptize, teach obedience.
- Throughout the past 2000 years of church history we have seen these things done throughout many churches.
- Missionaries are sent out to evangelize, often to other nations.
- The pastor teaches from the pulpit.
- The clergyman baptizes new believers in the church.
- The preacher encourages obedience to the Word of God.
- But are these tasks solely the responsibility of the pastor or church staff?
- Isn't the Great Commission for all believers?
- **John 20:21** *Again Jesus said, “Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”*
- In this verse we find Jesus sending all believers for the same reason that He was sent.
- So how can the everyday believer grow in becoming more missional?
- One way that you can grow in being more missional is to be hospitable and relational when with people.
- With the increased use of technology such as cell phones in the past 15 years, our society has become very individualistic.
- People are connected to hundreds of others online through Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok yet can struggle with being present with people in the same room.
- Have you ever been to a family gathering where most people are on their phones instead of engaging in relationship with those in the same room as them?
- Scripture often talks about fellowship, exercising hospitality, being generous, greeting each other and sharing our resources with others.
- These are all ways that each individual believer can be the presence of Jesus among people that do not know Him.
- The work of the ministry is not to be done by special people that call themselves missionaries.
- Specially appointed missionaries and those in vocational ministry (pastors and such) do play important roles and their work is valued and necessary.
- But all believers are Christ's ambassadors, His representatives on earth to a lost world.
- Following Christ is not just about attending church and serving within the body (which are good and necessary).
- Following Christ also includes carrying the gospel outside the church walls.
- We can do this by being generous, hospitable, being relational when with people, caring for people and bringing light to a dark world.
- We don't have to fix every problem or injustice in the world, but we do need to do our part to love and help others.

Part Three: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

1. Open in Prayer

2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

3. Group Discussion

- What is the difference between doing missions and being missional?
- What is the relationship between the “Great Commandment” (Matthew 22:36–40) and the “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:18–20)? Who do they influence each other?
- What are some practical ways that you can love others in your community? Think of ways of being generous and hospitable.
- What are your personal strengths in being missional? How about your areas of struggle?

4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
 - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
 - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

5. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.

Session Two: Reach Your Community

Part One: Personal Bible Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting

1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

2. Read Session 2 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

3. Personal Reflection Questions

- Read Isaiah 58:1-10.
- What are some reasons or excuses you might have given in the past for not serving people in your community? What are some solutions to these things?
- What keeps you from being more aware of the needy?
- Are there certain groups of people in your church who are in need? In your community? If so, what might you do to help?

4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this material into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week's Bible passage and memorize it.

Part Two: Study Notes – Reach Your Community

- As a believer, we should be able to see the difference that the church makes in our community.
- The church was not meant to be a sub-culture of society or a social circle. It was meant to have life transforming impact in its region.
- Unfortunately, there are churches who fall into the category of sub-culture and social circle. And when that happens the community begins to think that the church doesn't matter.
- A church that exists primarily for its congregants people outside the church will soon begin to believe that the church doesn't care about anyone other than themselves.
- No one sees the life transforming power of the gospel because it is hidden inside the walls of the church.
- We are called to be salt and light in a dark world. But the light has to get out of the church building and get out into the community to be seen.
- Believers and churches are to be a blessing in the world.
- **Read Isaiah 58:1–10.**
- In this passage God is rebuking the nation of Israel for their outward acts of righteousness. On the surface it looked like they loved God and were devoted to Him but God but the reality was that they did not fast with a right heart so it was an empty ritual.
- Even though they were doing the spiritual disciplines they still exploited their employees.
- This is NOT to say that the spiritual disciplines are bad – they should be leading people to love and right behaviour. But the people had shut off their heart when doing them.
- God tells His people that the disciplines are to be done in a way that pleases Him, beginning by getting right with their brothers and sisters.
- Stop oppressing each other and reach out and help others.
- Getting right with God requires treating each other with kindness, respect and love.
- This includes helping others with practical needs (food, clothing).
- If they would couple the spiritual disciplines with lives of righteousness and love, then they would see their prayers answered.
- The Bible references the poor more than 170 times speaking of those who are physically poor.
- God has a huge heart for the needy.
- Caring for the needy is an essential part of the Christian life.
- Reaching out to the needy may be easier than you think.
- Our church has areas where one can serve the needy – clothing closet, food hampers, etc.
- Giving to the needy may take time, money, or energy which is a sacrifice.
- If you look around, you will be able to find ample opportunities to help someone in need.
- Have you considered going on a short-term mission trip? Or taking on a service project? How about serving in a senior home or at a local soup kitchen?
- Service has a way of giving us a different perspective and showing us what is important to God.
- As we respond to God's call to serve the needy, it will bring us closer to Him.

Part Three: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

1. Open in Prayer

2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

3. Group Discussion

- In what ways have you seen the church succeed in impacting the community?
- What kind of impact should the church have on the community around it?
- What kind of opinion would you like your community to have about your church?
- What are some organizations in your community that provide for the needy?
- Is there something your small group can do to help the needy in your community?

4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
 - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
 - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

6. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.

Session Three: Get to Know Unbelievers

Part One: Personal Bible Study

To do on your own before the small group meeting

1. Prepare Your Heart

- Take a moment to prepare your heart and mind for what God has for you today.

2. Read Session 3 Study Notes

- Write down 1-3 things that stand out to you and why. You can write down more but highlight 1 for sharing with your small group.

3. Personal Reflection Questions

- Read John 4:1-42
- What do you know about the way Jews viewed Samaritans? Women? What does Jesus' intentional route through the heart of Samaria tell you? What does Jesus' interaction with a "loose" pagan woman tell you about him?
- Jesus initiated the conversation with a request for what He needed: "Will you give me a drink? (v. 7)." Imagining all the other possible remarks that he could have made, how does this disarm and give dignity to the woman?
- How did Jesus pique the Samaritan woman's interest, or make her thirsty, for what he had to offer (vv. 10-26)? Does your life make people thirsty for Jesus?
- What are a few things you can learn about evangelism from Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman?

4. Obedience/Action Step

- What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this material into practice in your life?
- What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).

5. Repentance

- Ask Jesus if there is any sin you need to confess. Confess as necessary and take the necessary steps towards obedience.

6. Prayer

- Spend some time thanking Jesus for who He is and what He has revealed to you.
- Ask Him if there is anything else He wants to speak to you about.
- Pray and intercede for what He lays on your heart (marriage, kids, ministry, friends, etc.)

7. Optional: Pick a verse(s) from this week's Bible passage and memorize it.

Part Two: Study Guide – Get to Know Unbelievers

- Life is busy. And with all the activities of the Christian culture, many Christians struggle to know someone who is not saved.
- In order to share your faith, the starting point is to know someone who is not a believer.
- Unbelievers should never be seen as a project or target to persuade to Christ. Our desire to share the gospel should come from a heart of love.
- It is much better to see unbelievers as real people who need friends, and as neighbors to love.
- With a bit of intentionality, becoming friends with those around us, we will naturally share what is important to us – including the Gospel.
- The gospel is full of expectation to move out and into other people’s lives and worlds.
- Yet most of outreach is centered on church programs or the church building.
- It is wonderful to invite someone to church or to a small group. These are good things.
- Yet often the most life altering things are often simple acts of kindness and love.
- **Read John 4:1–42.**
- In this passage Jesus shows us a simple example of reaching out to someone by simply asking for a drink of water.
- Immediately, the woman was impressed by the friendliness of Jesus.
- It was unusual for her to hear a kind greeting from a Jewish man as Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.
- Jesus drew the woman into conversation, making her curious about several things.
- Evangelism can be scary stuff. We may hesitate to share the gospel because we don’t know what to say or are worried that we will say the wrong thing, or we think we don’t know enough.
- Most of evangelism training focuses on the facts of the gospel and learning about apologetics.
- But the main focus should be the Good News – the centrality of Jesus from a heart of love.
- See Luke 10:25-37 and Luke 18:18-27.
- We bring Jesus to a lost world because of love.
- Loving our neighbour is a good starting point.
- Get to know the people around you - their joys and their pains.
- Maybe consider putting away the apologetics and factual answers and begin loving people.
- That means spending time with unbelievers, listening to their hearts and their questions.
- Get to know someone better this week.
- Go beyond the “Hi, how are you?” to asking if there is something you can pray about, sitting with the lonely person at the coffee shop, inviting your neighbour over for coffee or dessert.
- You don’t have to start with something huge or risky, just wade out a little deeper into these waters this week and see what God does.

Part Three: Small Group Plan

Do this section with a small group.

1. Open in Prayer

2. Weekly Connect

- Have each person share 1-2 things that they are thankful for from the past week.
- What was a struggle from the past week?

3. Group Discussion

- When was the last time you shared your faith? What happened?
- What are some simple ways you can reach out to those around you this week?
- What is something your small group can do this month to reach out to someone?

4. Sharing

- Share something from the study notes and the personal bible study that stood out to you and why.

5. Obedience/Action Step

- As part of the Personal Bible study, you were asked:
 - What is one practical step that you can take this week to put this passage into practice in your life?
 - What is your plan to follow through on this step? (who will hold you accountable, consider texting your small group for accountability).
- Share with your group how this went for you this past week.

5. Prayer

- Share a personal prayer request and pray for each other.
- Pray for churchwide prayer requests as well as our region, province, and nation.

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