

Life on Mission pt 1 The ❤️ of Mission – The Great Command

Intro: Stefan Duerksen, Lead Pastor

Church-Wide Prayer: Life on Mission (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus

- For camp staff, volunteers, campers – belonging, safety, fun, to KNOW & LOVE JESUS!
- Pray specifically for HS students at camp now - by name if you know them
- For Southland to be known for loving others and reaching the lost within our region
- For 1000 ppl to engage the Great Commission by discipling ONE PERSON – “each one, reach one”
- For SC to grow in: love for Jesus, freedom from sin, forgiving others, serving those in our community, generosity, and that our FAITH IN JESUS would be visible to ALL.

WE APPRECIATE YOU! Families in back, RTC, “WELCOME”.

INTRO: New Series! Life on Mission!

A. Life on Mission – Our part in God’s Grand Story!

Our MISSION statement: Love God, Love People, Be Discipled, Make Disciples

LIFE ON MISSION: simply means a life that is committed to loving & obeying Jesus above ALL things, which results in prioritizing His Great Command and Great Commission.

Stefan’s Story:

1. Before I became a follower of Jesus – I was a drug addict. I was anxious, angry, narcissistic.
 - a. I hurt people. Many people. I used them, manipulated, fought them, stole from them and worse.
 - b. I tried to intimidate people by lashing out and being a scary person.
 - c. It would have been EASY to AVOID ME. REJECT ME. And say, “HE’S TOO FAR GONE.”
 - d. THANKFULLY THAT DID NOT HAPPEN!

KEY: Hurt people – hurt people – NOT AN EXCUSE – But important to remember as we consider LIFE ON MISSION. Do we avoid people that disagree with us? Or that hate us for our faith? or, do we love them and reach out to them?

2. **Family & people from church reached out to me and Louise MANY TIMES. Showed us we mattered!**
3. **What if we had been rejected or ignored?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

- Have you given your, “YES” to Jesus and living your Life on Mission?
- Can you name one or two people who have been instrumental or encouraging in your life?
- How did they help you?

If you have breath in your lungs – I can guarantee you are here ON PURPOSE. And if you are here ON PURPOSE, you are here FOR PURPOSE.

On purpose, for purpose! What is that purpose?

WHAT ABOUT? Young woman who says she's a lesbian and hates Christians... Should we reject her? Or, SHOW HER SHE IS A VALUABLE IMAGE BEARER. Or, the teenage boy who dresses like a girl? REJECT? Or, SHOW HIM HE MATTERS? Or, the atheist that says "God is a fairy tale" or, the family member that is rebelling? The person stuck in drug addiction? The homeless person you see?

Do we pass by like the religious leaders in the Good Samaritan? Or, do we GO to them, SEE them, LISTEN to them, SERVE them, LOVE them, PRAY for them? SHARE Jesus?

REFLECTION QUESTION:

- **When you see someone in need, or lost in sin. Do you act more like the Good Samaritan? or, the religious leaders?**
- **are you known more for what you are against? or, what you are for?**

A. The Great Command – Love God, Love People

Matthew 22:34-40 (ESV) But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

It is a popular phrase amongst Christian circles today to say things like, "Just love people" or, "Love God, love people – simple."

John 13:35 By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

It MUST be MORE than a slogan – THIS IS ABOUT ACTION – can you SEE IT IN YOUR LIFE!?!

- **1 John 4:7-9 (ESV)** Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.
 - **God is Love - SIMPLE: You want to know if your FAITH is real? Look at how you love God & people!**
- **1 John 4:19-21** We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.
- **1 John 5:1-4** Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves whoever has been born of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.
 - **Everyone who believes – has faith: SAVED**
 - **Everyone who LOVES God – LOVES PEOPLE**
 - **How do we know if we LOVE PEOPLE?**

- **BY LOVING GOD = OBEY HIS COMMANDMENTS.**
- **His COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT BURDENSOME.**
- **THOSE WHO DO THE ABOVE? OVERCOME THE WORLD!!!**
- **And what is the FUEL SOURCE? Our FAITH.**
- **FAITH in ACTION = LIFE on MISSION.**

God is LOVE – He desires to SAVE ALL PEOPLE – His Plan? PAY FOR OUR SINS – GIVE US HIS SPIRIT – THEN SEND HIS CHURCH TO COMPLETE HIS WORK UNTIL HE RETURNS - WE ARE THE PLAN – THE CHURCH – EMPOWERED BY THE SPIRIT! It is OUR JOB to reach the LOST. To SHOW THE LOVE OF CHRIST to a DYING WORLD. Sitting on the sidelines as a bench warmer? IS NOT AN OPTION FOR BELIEVERS.

Definitions matter. A growing trend we see in our culture today is the definitions of words being changed. LOVE is one of them! WE MUST RESIST THE NEW DEFINITION AND CHAMPION TRUE LOVE!

When you look at how our culture defines love. It often includes that we: **1.** Don't push your beliefs on others – unless they are socially accepted; **2.** Don't say things are sinful; **3.** Whatever feels right for you is right; **4.** If you don't accept "my truth" and "agree" with it – you don't love me. **5.** AFFIRMATION of BEHAVIOR = LOVE

JESUS LOVED SINNERS – HE ATE WITH THEM – SPENT TIME WITH THEM! Jesus also addressed sin, called about religious leaders and their abuse of power & people, warned of coming judgement, instructed people that BELIEF was not enough – that OBEDIENCE mattered... AND he cried with friends, met people where they were at, comforted the broken and healed many people of their afflictions. Jesus was accused of being a "friend of sinners" WE SHOULD BE ACCUSED SIMILARLY! THIS IS OUR MODEL!

CAVEAT: You do NOT have to agree with someone to LOVE THEM. Whether in the LGBTQ community OR someone who has hurt you – you don't have to pretend that what happened was OK in order to FORGIVE & LOVE.

MY STORY: I don't know if I'd be here today IF...

- No one took a risk - Showed me that I mattered - Met me where I was at - Shared Jesus with me!
- Listened to my questions and found answers
- **CAVEAT:** My family, key people in the church, etc. never affirmed my lifestyle, they also didn't spend their time correcting every wrong in my life – THEY SIMPLY SHOWED ME THAT I MATTERED. I was worth something. Worth pursuing. Worth listening to. Worth making an effort for.

You want to fulfill your PURPOSE as a Christian? You want to be successful in LIFE?

1 Corinthians 13:1-7 If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

RADICAL CLAIM! LOVE the HIGHEST IMPORTANCE: forgives, is patient, doesn't hold onto hurts, chooses to see the best in others, protects, hopes, is patient and kind! Is humble.

REFLECTION QUESTION: YOU can be the DIFFERENCE in someone's life! (Take me to the Harvest first verse as people do questions!)

- Does your life show that you PRIORITY love God and loving people? why? Or, why not? what can you do this week to grow in love?
- Who do you need to forgive? do it now! Look for a way to encourage that person!
- Who is someone that needs to know they matter? how can you show them love?
- TEXT or write a note of encouragement to someone who has loved you well

This is the HEART of MISSIONS. This is the HEART OF THE GOSPEL. God made us to love and glorify him and live in perfect harmony and unity with him! And then to MODEL THIS TO THE DYING WORLD.

AFTER SERVICE PRAYER – PRAYER ROOM – 9AM and 11AM

MARANATHA!! Come soon Lord!

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SC CHURCH WIDE PRAYER REQUESTS 2024

Cruise ship → → → → Battleship

Life on Mission (Mt 28:18-20, Mt 22:37-40): Love, serve & disciple people to Jesus

Next Gen (Ps 78:7-8): Encounters with Jesus, strong mental health, boldness & belonging

Israel & Persecuted Church (Lk 21:13): Faith, fortitude & wisdom “to not waste the opportunity to share the Gospel”

Heart of Prayer (Ps 27:4): Every generation to find Jesus & learn to bring their needs to Him in prayer

Church Renewal: Directors for India and other new countries & many global disciple makers