

# Growing in Mission

## Intro

“How do we measure up?”

As we have seen over the past 2 weeks there are 3 primary “spiritual behaviours” according to willow creek. Or things people who follow Jesus do.

We have already looked at growing in serving, growing in giving, and today we’ll look together at growing in mission.

## ME

There have been a **few highlights in my life**, getting **married**, my **boys being born**, being **filled with the HS**, **Em deciding to follow Jesus**. In fact the first 2, married to Em and birth of my boys **wouldn’t have happened if the last hadn’t**. To hear Em’s voice when she told me that she had decided to follow Jesus and give her life to him **was amazing. What a buzz, what joy!** What an amazing answer to prayer.

Having experienced that, why **do I find it so hard to tell people about Jesus and the effect he has had on my life?** It’s even hard to always live a life that displays what Jesus has done.

## WE

Some of us **find it very hard to talk to people about our faith**, some **find it easy**, some **find it easy, but are not actually seeing people come to know Jesus. Why is this?**

Well we are all at different stages in our journey with Jesus, these four stages of Christian growth are:

**1. Exploring Christ, 2. Growing in Christ, 3. Close to Christ, 4. Christ centred.**

So what does mission like for us on our journey with Christ. What could a typical experience be?

## GOD

1. We start with **an initial excitement about our conversion** and might share some aspects of our journey with others and may quite **freely tell others** about our new-found faith.

### Mark 1:44-45 (New International Version)

<sup>44</sup>"See that you don't tell this to anyone. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing, as a testimony to them." <sup>45</sup>Instead he went out and began to talk freely, spreading the news. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet the people still came to him from everywhere.

Even when Jesus told them not to tell people about what had happened to them, they still did. Something had changed so much that they had to tell others about it and about Jesus.

**Were you ever like this?** This is one of the key factors of successful alpha courses. **People discover Jesus, and change, other see or hear this and want to find out more.**

2. **Rejection takes place**, we find that our enthusiasm meets with hostility and even persecution, we can tend to **back down and keep our faith private** begin to lose unconverted friends and **strengthen friendships with Christians.**

**Satan want to disable us, sometimes an ineffective Christian is more use to Satan than an unbeliever!!**

Jesus said:

### Matt 5: 10-12

<sup>10</sup>Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

<sup>11</sup>"Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. <sup>12</sup>Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

### John 15:18-21

<sup>18</sup>"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. <sup>19</sup>If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. <sup>20</sup>Remember the words I spoke to you: 'No servant is greater than his master.' If they persecuted me, they will persecute you also. If they obeyed my teaching, they will obey yours also. <sup>21</sup>They will treat you this way because of my name, for they do not know the One who sent me.

The apostles **didn't go introverted and concentrate on themselves and those who were already saved**, what they did was described in **Acts 5:42** Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ

**How can we help those growing in Christ not to retreat into the Christian ghetto??**

3. There is a **realisation of responsibility**. We realise that the **great commission applies to us** and we make some effort to connect with unbelievers and live in such a way that bears witness to Christ.

**We have a job to do, the word ringing in the ears of the disciples as Jesus died was GO!**

#### **Matt 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, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

I love this!! **I am with you**, Jesus says. This should fill us with **CONFIDENCE!!**  
Jesus wasn't just asking if they would mind doing him a favour! It was his parting command.

We are also called to let our light shine.

#### **Matt 5:13-16**

You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.

<sup>14</sup>"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

**What does this mean?** It means we need to deal with things in a Godly way.

### **4. Loving the Lost.**

Jesus came to **seek and save the lost at all cost**. This speaks against **pride, fear, embarrassment and indifference**. None of these are characteristics of Jesus and therefore are things those who are Christ like seek not to exhibit.

Christ centred people **live for him and will therefore get his heart of compassion for the lost**.

Lost Son.

Being Christ centred means being like Jesus and doing as he does.

We are called to be disciples of Jesus. **"Discipleship is doing what Jesus did"**  
**Jesus equips us with the power of the HS this is why the apostles were out there, rather than in a holy huddle.**

Living for Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, **is a way of life** and boldly taking any opportunity to speak about Christ to those who are lost, whatever the consequences.

## YOU

God has a mission for us MI Theme music.....

**Your mission should you chose to accept it.**

Today we have a choice. **Do we accept this mission?**

**It is completely up to you.**

If you do not want to accept the mission **God is not going to twist your arm to make you do it, neither will any of the leaders in this church.**

It is completely up to you whether you want to grow in mission or not, you will not be disqualified from God's grace or love.

But let me ask **why any of us would want to miss out on such an opportunity**, such **an amazing adventure**. There **is nothing like being there when someone gives their life over to Jesus**. The bible even says the **whole of heaven rejoices over one sinner saved**.

If we are close **to Christ or Christ centred then mission is an area of our lives in which we will grow in**. It is **so much part of Jesus that it will be part of us**.

Just like in mission impossible it is **not something we can do on a whim**. In the TV series or the movies there was one thing that was very clear. **They had a plan!**

It started with a **strategy**, then **planning** took place, they then **executed the plan**, and every time they **succeeded**.

Our mission doesn't just happen, we need to be work out what we will do and how we will do it.

What is your strategy to grow in this area of your life?

## WE

So **what will the outcome be** of a successful mission. Well **most importantly people will come to know and follow Jesus**, but also as in my story right at the beginning about Em, **there will be amazing joy and satisfaction..**

I love this quote, I would love this to be true of ABC:

**"To be missional means that the individual members and the body as a whole understand and follow their calling from God to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ fervently to as many people as the Holy Spirit would lead. It means that we are engaged in personal relationships with the lost on purpose in order to show them the love of Christ and how He sacrificed His Son to die for our sins."**

Scott Thomas

This is your mission, should you chose to accept it.....

Scriptures: Luke 24:44-49, Acts 1:8,

### **Acts 5:26-42**

<sup>25</sup>Then someone came and said, "Look! The men you put in jail are standing in the temple courts teaching the people." <sup>26</sup>At that, the captain went with his officers and brought the apostles. They did not use force, because they feared that the people would stone them.

<sup>27</sup>Having brought the apostles, they made them appear before the Sanhedrin to be questioned by the high priest. <sup>28</sup>"We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name," he said. "Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood."

<sup>29</sup>Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!" <sup>30</sup>The God of our fathers raised Jesus from the dead—whom you had killed by hanging him on a tree. <sup>31</sup>God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Saviour that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel. <sup>32</sup>We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him."

<sup>33</sup>When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death. <sup>34</sup>But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, who was honoured by all the people, stood up in the Sanhedrin and ordered that the men be put outside for a little while. <sup>35</sup>Then he addressed them: "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. <sup>36</sup>Some time ago Theudas appeared, claiming to be somebody, and about four hundred men rallied to him. He was killed, all his followers were dispersed, and it all came to nothing. <sup>37</sup>After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt. He too was killed, and all his followers were scattered. <sup>38</sup>Therefore, in the present case I advise you: Leave these men alone! Let them go! For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. <sup>39</sup>But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God."

<sup>40</sup>His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go.

<sup>41</sup>The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name. <sup>42</sup>Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ

### **Acts 8 1-8**

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. <sup>2</sup>Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him. <sup>3</sup>But Saul began to destroy the church. Going from house to house, he dragged off men and women and put them in prison.

Philip in Samaria

<sup>4</sup>Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. <sup>5</sup>Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. <sup>6</sup>When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said. <sup>7</sup>With shrieks, evil spirits came out of many, and many paralytics and cripples were healed. <sup>8</sup>So there was great joy in that city.