



### Following Jesus Part 5

**Title:** My Gospel, My Mission

**Gospel Wheel Focus:** Mission

**Text:** Romans 10.1-17

Good morning. before we get into this sermon I want to give you a preview of where we are going. In two weeks we are starting our summer series called “10 ways to be perfect.” We are going to be in Exodus 20 exploring the 10 commandments and I’m really excited about it. the 10 commandments make a GREAT bridge into the gospel. They paint the picture of the perfect life. Do these 10 things, life is going to be perfect. It’s the portrait of human flourishing. How to have a good family, how to have work/life balance, how to fight greed & jealousy, how to be content but still ambitious. It’s an incredible summary of God’s design for humanity. Not only that, they are God’s laws so we are told to keep them. Jesus doubles down on that. **The problem is**, none of us can keep them. Life usually unravels at the point we fall short of them. So what each commandment ultimately does is point to our need for help. For rescue from ourselves. The 10 commandments point us to Jesus who lived the perfect life and then the grace he offers us in exchanging his life for ours.

The 10 commandments are really well known but also widely misunderstood and you’ll see them as a Pinnacle of Grace by the time we are done. So ya’ll help us talk this series up with those you know. Pray for our teaching team here as we get ready for it. We’ll be in it all summer. Big series for us.

Today to finish our following Jesus series we are looking at the Mission of God. We’ve taken this series to look at what it means to be a Christian and really the core values our church runs on. We said our whole lives are built on the gospel of what Christ has done for us. He came for us when we didn’t deserve it. He loved us. And our whole lives are a response to that. The Gospel is not just how you begin in the Christian faith, it’s how you grow. It’s not just the front door to the Christian house, it’s the whole house. Then we said growth in the gospel happens as we devote ourselves to God. Nothing is more impactful for growing as a follower of Jesus than reading the bible. Then last week looked at community. The gospel creates a new community. It gathers us together. We said basically if you get God as father, you get the church as family. Talked about the rhythms of serving and caring for one another in the family. This weekend we are talking about the mission of God. The gospel saves us, gathers us into a new community, and then sends us out.

The big idea for today: **The gospel creates a desire in us to accomplish the mission.**

That’s where we are going today. We’ll be in Romans 10 so if you have your bible go there. We believe this down to our core and we believe every follower of Jesus, **every member is**

**a missionary. Every pastor is a missions pastor.** Because when the gospel saves us it also creates a desire in us to accomplish the mission. That goes back to **the gospel wheel** that we've shown you every week. At the center of our lives is the gospel. It's the story, the news of what Jesus has done to save us and reconcile us to God. And our lives...Devotion, Community, Mission...our whole life is fueled by a love for God who has captured our hearts. We desire to follow him because he has proven better than anything else. That's big when we talk about mission today.

Listen if you are a Christian there are a couple of reasons I see regularly that causes Christians to just be bored by the mission of God and lazy in with their faith<sup>1</sup>. Two reasons: Either you aren't really aware of the mission of God or you are approaching the mission for the wrong reasons. And we are going to tackle both of them today.

The first – Maybe you are just not aware that there is a grand, overarching mission that God has given believers. That our chief purpose in life is to glorify God with our lives by taking the gospel to the very ends of the earth. That Jesus calls each one of us to this mission as the pursuit to build our lives around...maybe you just aren't aware of that. And if you aren't, then you will take lesser pursuits, smaller things and elevate them to that top spot. The next job, the next house, romance whatever that will become the mission of our lives. But they are too small so they won't satisfy us. So we'll go

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<sup>1</sup> I owe the articulation of these two mission misunderstandings to Andrew Hopper who brought them out in a sermon on Titus 2 on Mothers Day Weekend, 2019. Great, Timely thought for me.

from one to the other trying to find that satisfying mission but that search is only satisfied when we center our lives on the mission of God. And maybe today you need to see that.

But the other reason Christians get tired or bored by the mission of God is because they are in it for the wrong reasons. Even though you believe you are saved by the gospel...The gospel saves you...you start to think you gotta earn your keep. And the mission, sharing your faith with others, becomes a checklist. We Christians, even though we know we are saved by faith, start engaging the mission out of fear or guilt. Fear God won't approve of us or guilt that we could be doing more. And that is not at all what God wants for us. He created us to love him out of his love for us. To love other believers out of his love for us. And to love the world out of his love for us.

So I want to show you a gospel perspective on everyday life. That in every arena God has you in, he is sending you into it as an agent of hope for a world in desperate need of it. As you get groceries, as you go to your job, as you go to class, move in on campus, whatever it is...God is sending you there and you are created to carry a message of hope with JOY but, too often we miss it either because we didn't know about it, or because we are in it for the wrong reason.

Tell you the difference: Grew up in church. We used to do these things called high attendance Sunday. Nothing wrong with that, but the thing was...invite your friend so we can have

high attendance. And so I'd ask my friend – apologetically. Like apologizing in advance for inviting him to church. BUT...in college I learned the gospel as the hub. And I went EXCITED over to china and readily went out on campus meeting total strangers who spoke broken English and I spoke basically no Chinese and with joy shared with them. The difference was my heart was in it because I was motivated by the love of God for me, not just doing it because I was *supposed to*. Listen, “suppose to” religion will create MOUNTAINS of GUILT. You can't survive on it. That's why christians leave the faith after high school. Tired of “suppose to.” High School Students: you need a more compelling faith than “suppose to.” Christianity always starts with what has been done for you. It calls you to wonder and marvel at GOD and then respond with your life. That's this whole series. And today we are talking about the big mission of your life and its gotta be bigger than “suppose to.”

Romans 10 - Apostle Paul is writing to the church in Rome talking to them about the mission they are called to. 3 sections: **The Desire, The Gospel Message, The Mission**

1 Brothers and sisters, my heart's desire and prayer to God concerning them is for their salvation.

The “them” are his fellow Jews. Paul grew up Jewish and while he now finds his first family to be the church, he still has this affection for his people. His culture. And his DESIRE is for their salvation. In chapter 9 he's going to say he would do ANYTHING to see them come to Christ. He says he has great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart for these people. If

it were possible to trade places with them so they could know Christ, he'd do it. This is the kind of missional desire the gospel produces. When I come to understand the gospel, I experience a love that I've never experienced before. A compassion from God to me that makes me more compassionate as it opens my eyes to the one thing that matters.

Do you see how those two misunderstandings of the mission I brought up earlier get corrected by the gospel. Because when I dwell on what Christ has done for me...and what was at stake...that eternity hung in the balance and he saved me from eternity...The mission starts to take on greater reality & urgency. I can't claim ignorance to what is at stake. And when I receive it as an act of love...I start to develop an increasing desire for those I love to know God's love for them.

he who really has this high estimate of Jesus will think much of him, and as the thoughts are sure to run over at the mouth, he will talk much of him. Do we so? If Jesus is precious to you, you will not be able to keep your good news to yourself; you will be whispering it into your child's ear; you will be telling it to your husband; you will be earnestly imparting it to your friend; without the charms of eloquence you will be more than eloquent; your heart will speak, and your eyes will flash as you talk of his sweet love. Every Christian here is either a missionary or an impostor. You either try to spread abroad the kingdom of Christ, or else you do not love him at all. It cannot be that there is a high appreciation of Jesus and a totally silent tongue about him. -Charles Spurgeon

Is he your joy? If you love him, you'll talk about him. And you'll have anguish over those who don't know him.

Let me reframe a question we ask often around here: Whose your one? One person far from God but close to you...now let me ask you: has the reality that they don't know God brought ANGUISH to your soul? **Have you ever wept for that person's salvation?** If it does not trouble you that someone you love doesn't know Christ, you may not know Christ.

**The gospel creates a desire in us to accomplish the mission.**

**2 I can testify about them that they have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. 3 Since they are ignorant of the righteousness of God and attempted to establish their own righteousness, they have not submitted to God's righteousness. 4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes,**

He is saying listen: They have Zeal. Man nobody does religion like my people. BUT, they are trying to obey God's laws to prove their worth before God. And he's saying THEY'VE MISSED IT. Christ is the end of the law. Righteousness is the bible's way of saying "approved by God." And he's saying they are zealous in trying to do good. But completely missing it. So friends let me sum this up real clearly: you cannot DO enough good to earn good standing with God. No matter how sincere your intentions, if you are placing your hope in anything other than Christ, you will never find God.

It's like inviting everyone you know over for dinner and you are gonna cook. cause you watched a you tube video and now you are a baking expert. And you put all the ingredients in for this awesome baked salmon dish or something. And you put it in there and ya'll are mingling and everything but then you look at 7:00 and its still just as cold as it was when you put it in. Why? Because you never turned on the oven. Now you really, sincerely wanted to cook. And put in a lot of effort. But you got some raw fish. Because sincerity doesn't cook good food. Heat does. Sincerity without heat means you are going out for food now. It's the same with God. Sincere misplaced effort does not lead you to salvation. Only faith in Christ's work on the cross for you will lead you to salvation.

Over the next few verses Paul says and here's the thing: The gospel is not far off. You don't have to go on a deep long quest to find God.

**5 since Moses writes about the righteousness that is from the law: The one who does these things will live by them. 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith speaks like this: Do not say in your heart, "Who will go up to heaven?" that is, to bring Christ down 7 or, "Who will go down into the abyss?" that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.**

He's quoting MOSES, who the Jews revere, who said the law wasn't far hidden from the Israelites. And in the same way, the gospel righteousness is not hidden from you now. It's free and accessible. You don't have to go to great lengths. Christ has come down from heaven, he's come up from the grave. Don't make it harder than it is:

8 On the contrary, what does it say? The message is near you, in your mouth and in your heart.

He says instead: this message is near you. And you are hearing it. And as you hear it, it makes your heart light up. It stirs something in your soul. And here it is:

This is the message of faith that we proclaim: 9 If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**the gospel:** Jesus is Lord, he died for our sins and God raised him from the dead.

Beautifully simple. It starts with the Confession that Jesus is Lord...that he is God. And therefore you submit to him. He is the one with the power to save. And that he died on the cross for your sin. And you believe as God he didn't stay dead. He rose from the dead. So the curse of sin was broken. That's how we are saved! AND you don't work for it, you believe it. Paul is saying to the church in Rome: THAT'S GOOD NEWS!

By the way, I need to pause and say something right here about our deepest motivation for mission. It's for the sake of the glory of this Christ.

He is about to send this church out to tell these Jews in their community so he says:

10 One believes with the heart, resulting in righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, resulting in salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, Everyone who believes on him will not be

put to shame, 12 since there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, because the same Lord of all richly blesses all who call on him. **13 For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**

There is so much here that we just aren't covering today but verse 13 is one I want to make sure you see. Everyone. There is no one who has too bad of a past. No one who is beyond the offer of salvation. I will never forget sharing with a young man who had been abused by an older man as a child. The shame was so heavy on him he thought, no way this is for me. The trauma of his youth had conditioned him to think if anyone fully knew him he would be disqualified from their love. And this was what broke through the wall and began his path to healing. It was this word. Everyone. No matter your past, or your culture. Jew & Greek – all cultures come to God the same singular way - Through Jesus. Everyone on planet earth can call on the name of the Lord. Currently ¼ of the world lives in what Joshua Project calls a Frontier People Group. Less than .1% Christian. Means there is no real chance of hearing about Jesus from one of their own. BUT...THEY are a part of the everyone. THEY TOO, if they will only call on Jesus, will be saved. That should compel us. Talk more on that later.

That's the gospel and it's so amazingly simple. And then he says ok....If it's so simple & so urgent...we gotta get it out there.

And that transitions us into the last part of our passage which is the Mission.

14 How, then, can they call on him they have not believed in? And how can they believe without hearing about him? And how can they hear without a preacher? 15 And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. 16 But not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed our message? **17 So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the message about Christ.**

Paul now turns to application. He says IF you understand the gospel, it will create a desire in you for others to know Christ. How could such love not? And then the way he gets to their participation in the mission of God is through a series of 4 questions. I love that LOGIC is Paul's tool of choice here. These questions all assume a negative answer:

- How can they call on someone they haven't believed in? - they can't
- How can they believe if they haven't heard about him? They can't
- How can they hear without a preacher? – They can't.
- How can they preach unless they are sent? – Let's pause on that last one. You could technically preach without being sent right? Paul says no. There is a commissioning that every believer needs to recognize they have from the Lord. The Lord is sending us all out. And he's sending us with his Holy Spirit. And to preach apart from that commission is to preach in vain. It's really not to preach at all. But with that power...God can do wonders.

Then he quotes Isaiah and says how beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news. The word gospel means news. And was originally used to describe the message a runner would bring from the front lines of the battlefield. When the army won the battle, they would send a runner to go tell the people "the gospel" - the good news. Man what an awesome job. Everybody celebrated at that guy's announcement. And Paul is saying...we are that guy. We carry the greatest news of victory ever. And FAITH in that message only comes by HEARING IT!!! Not everyone will believe it. But its not up to us to make them believe it. That's their business. Our king has given this message to us and sent us here and now to Charlotte & he sends us around the world. So we gotta tell it! God is drawing you into his mission. An awesome mission.

I want to show you a big collective implication this has for Mercy Church and how you fit into that. We believe at Mercy that this Mission is the grand purpose God has created us for. SO, we are laser focused as a church on getting this message to as many people as possible. As a church, this is why we are so thankful to be a part of the Summit Network. This is a network of churches, right now about 40 or so that have been planted over the last 8 years. Mercy is one of those churches. And our network vision is to plant 1000 churches in our lifetime all across the world. And ya'll, that is a MOVEMENT goal. It's something too big for any one person. Here's what we've done so far: **JACK could we put the logos maybe of the churches we've partnered with?**

- Reach LA – Caleb & Melissa Bromley
- Crossroads Community Church – Brooklyn NY
- Image Church – ATL

- Park Slope Community Church – Brooklyn NY – A couple going out.
- Freedom Global in Kenya – Catherine Mitchell

What I want to know is how many churches Mercy is going to commit to planting. I'm praying through that. I'd love for us to take 50 of those 1000 and say we are going to plant multiplying churches. That's going to happen when every member is a missionary. Because then listen, as we continue to plant churches, we challenge you to be a part of it. The way we say it is:

**Put your yes on the table. Let God put it on the Map.**

In other words, we aren't saying stop being a banker or a teacher or an electrician. We are saying carry your vocation with you to a strategic place in the world that needs to hear the gospel. **Do what you do to the glory of God. And do it somewhere strategic for the mission of God!** Maybe that is stateside, maybe that is overseas. Whether you are in college or you have a young family and feel like you are "settled down"... or you are an empty nester now...the mission of God is what you are created for! **DON'T WASTE YOUR LIFE** by missing out on this! So we are going to keep putting opportunities in front of you. Short Term and Long Term. And we are going to say LET'S GO!

Rodney Stark, in his book the rise of Christianity, observes the apostle Paul's strategy as basically: Choose the biggest most influential cities in the known world...and plant churches there. That's what he did and we are continuing that legacy today!

And I believe, with everything I have...that Mercy can be and SHOULD BE a powerful sending church for the next 50 years. And the way we get there is individuals saying "ok God" here I am. Open handed. Ready to go. [Mercycharlotte.com/upcomingtrips](http://Mercycharlotte.com/upcomingtrips). Let's go see what God is doing around the world.

**HOW ELSE ARE THEY GOING TO HEAR!? THEY AREN'T! The greatest threat fulfilling the calling God has on your life is thinking that when he said "go make disciples" he was talking to somebody else.** He's given YOU the Holy Spirit, he's given YOU the gospel and he's said GO!

And EVERYTHING WE DO is to that end.

Church Plants – Intentionally engaging in places where Jesus isn't known in united states and around the world. That's why we take these short term trips. To expose you to what God is doing around the world. And maybe what keeps you from going is fear. what would happen to me if I go? Wrong question: Paul's question: what happens to them if I stay?

Kids week – Coming up in a month. Why? Easy to invite. Build a friendship with a family and use this as a way to share the gospel!

Weekend services – We try to create an atmosphere here that is accessible for people who aren't christians. And we SEND you.



Community Group – A lot of people feel more comfortable in your home than in a church service. So we gather in homes where non-Christians can come and belong before they believe.

I've got one life. And I'm not about to waste it playing the church game. And I LOVE that Mercy church is so bought in to this.

Let me land it in a real practical step for right here at home.

How can you engage the mission this week?

We've got people, our one, who we love and they need this good news! And we get to tell them! Listen over on our website for this series we've got a wonderful tool to help you think through how to talk about your faith with those around you. The acronym is **F.I.S.H. goes up one letter at a time as I explain. If possible.**

- **F – Friendship.** Jesus was friends with sinners. With people who needed him. And the first question you need to assess is – are you only friends with Christians? That's why we try to keep programming to a minimum here. So you have time to build friendships with people who need to know Jesus. If I say "whose your one?" And you reply – everybody I know knows Jesus. Well, time to step out and build some new friendships. DEFINITELY hard for me ok so I'm not judging. Everybody I work with is a Christian. And btw – I don't befriend them as a PROJECT to work on. My hope is they will come to know Christ, but my intent is to be their friend. Period.

- **I – Initiate Spiritual Conversations.** My close friends know that I'm a Christian and that it's important to me. Sometimes people feel like it might be weird to talk about it, I feel like it'd be weird not to. Here's my story. What was your church background like? What do you believe about God? Never know what you will get with that
- **S – Share the gospel.** Plenty of ways to do this but the point is, tell them the good news. The runner didn't just small talk forever. No he shared the good news! Likewise. And again good tools on our website for that.
- **H – Help them make a decision.** I think this one is often overlooked. When we share good news we call them to receive it. We don't coerce or manipulate, but just show them that a just as any gift has to be received, so the gift of salvation has to be received. Help them along.

The Gospel Saves, The Gospel Creates a New Community, The Gospel Sends us Out.



“The highest of all missionary motives is neither obedience to the Great Commission (important as that is), nor love for sinners who are alienated and perishing (strong as that incentive is, especially when we contemplate the wrath of God), but rather zeal—burning and passionate zeal—for the glory of Jesus Christ. Only one imperialism is Christian, and that is concern for His Imperial Majesty Jesus Christ, and for the glory of his empire or kingdom. Before this supreme goal of the Christian mission, all unworthy motives wither and die.”

- John Stott

“Once more, he who really has this high estimate of Jesus will think much of him, and as the thoughts are sure to run over at the mouth, he will talk much of him. Do we so? If Jesus is precious to you, you will not be able to keep your good news to yourself; you will be whispering it into your child’s ear; you will be telling it to your husband; you will be earnestly imparting it to your friend; without the charms of eloquence you will be more than eloquent; your heart will speak, and your eyes will flash as you talk of his sweet love. Every Christian here is either a missionary or an impostor. Recollect that. You either try to spread abroad the kingdom of Christ, or else you do not love him at all. It cannot be that there is a high appreciation of Jesus and a totally silent tongue about him. Of course I do not mean by that, that those who use the pen are silent: they are not. And those who help others to use the tongue, or spread that which others have written, are

doing their part well: but that man who says, “I believe in Jesus,” but does not think enough of Jesus ever to tell another about him, by mouth, or pen, or tract, is an impostor. You are either doing good, or you are not good yourself. If thou knowest Christ, thou art as one that has found honey; thou wilt call others to taste of it; thou art like the lepers who found the food which the Syrians had cast away: thou wilt go to Samaria and tell the hungry crowd that thou hast found Jesus, and art anxious that they should find him too. Be wise in your generation, and speak of him in fitting ways and at fitting times, and so in every place proclaim the fact that Jesus is most precious to your soul.”