

Bible Study for the Missional Church

Prepared by Rev. John Collett

Week 1:

Who are we as children of God and disciples of Jesus?

Genesis 1.27-28. 31

*God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. **God blessed them** and said to them, "Be fertile and multiply..."God saw everything that God had made, and **it was supremely good.***

- What does it mean for us that we are created in the image of God?
- What does it mean for how we live that all of God's creation is blessed and supremely good?

Genesis 12.1-3

*The LORD said to Abram, "Leave your land, your family, and your father's household for the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and **you will be a blessing.** I will bless those who bless you, those who curse you I will curse; **all the families of the earth will be blessed because of you.**"*

- If God's purpose in calling Abraham and Sarah we to bless all the families of earth, what does that say about God's mission for the church?

Week 2:

Isaiah 43.1-2, 5, 10

*But now, says the LORD— the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; **I have called you by name; you are mine.** When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you won't be scorched and flame won't burn you... Don't fear, I am with you... **You are my witnesses,** says the LORD, my servant, whom I chose, so that you would know and believe me and understand that I am the one.*

- What does it mean for us to believe we are named and claimed by God?
- What assurance does God's abiding presence give us?

Week 2:

Isaiah 49.1, 3, 6

The LORD called me before my birth, called my name when I was in my mother's womb...saying to me, "You are my servant, Israel, in whom I show my glory." He said: "It is not enough, since you are my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to bring back the survivors of Israel. Hence, I will also appoint you as light to the nations so that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

- Like Israel, how is it that the church of Jesus has the same mission: light to the nations so that God's salvation may reach the end of the earth?

Luke 3.21-22 (Mark 1.9-11)

When everyone was being baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down on him in bodily form like a dove. And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

- How is our baptism like that of Jesus' in the sense that in baptism God claims us as God's own?

Week 3:

Ephesians 1.13-14

In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

- What does it feel like to think that in our baptism God *marked us with the seal* of the Holy Spirit?

John 13.34-35

*I give you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, so you also must love each other. **This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, when you love each other.**"*

- How best should others know us as Christians, followers of Jesus?

Week 4:

John 15.12-16

*This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you. No one has greater love than to give up one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you... You didn't choose me, but **I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit...***

- How have you/we been chosen? What fruit are we appointed to bear? How?

Acts 3. 25

You are the heirs of the prophets and the covenant that God made with your ancestors when he told Abraham, "Through your descendants, all the families on earth will be blessed." (Gen 12.3)

- How does this mandate in Acts 3 remind us of God's mission through Abraham & Sarah?

Week 5:

Galatians 3.24-29

*Therefore, the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, **for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.** As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. **And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.***

- What does it mean that we are all children of God through faith?

Week 6:

Why do we exist as God's covenant people and the church of Jesus Christ?

Genesis 1.27-28

*God created humanity in God's own image, in the divine image God created them, male and female God created them. **God blessed them and said to them, "Be fertile and multiply..."***

- How is our mission as the church in continuity with God's mission through Abraham & Sarah?

Genesis 12.3

*I will make of you a great nation and will bless you. I will make your name respected, and **you will be a blessing**. I will bless those who bless you, those who curse you I will curse; **all the families of the earth will be blessed because of you.**"*

- How might we as Christians be blessed to be a bless to all the people of the earth?

Week 7:

Isaiah 49.1, 3, 6

*"**You are my servant, Israel, in whom I show my glory.**"... Hence, **I will also appoint you as light to the nations so that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.**"*

- How are we carrying out our mission to be light to all people for God's salvation?

Luke 4.18-19

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me. He has sent me to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate the oppressed, and to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

- How is our mission reflective of Jesus' mission?

Week 8:

Matthew 22.37-40

*"Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?" He replied, "**You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands.**"*

- If Jesus reaffirmed that God's will is done by following to two great commandments, how will we live out love of God and love of neighbor here – what we work, live, and play?

Matthew 25

*I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. **I was a stranger and you welcomed me.** I was naked and you gave me clothes to wear. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.*

- How do we as individuals and as a church live out this way of being where Christ is?

Week 9:

Matthew 28.18-20

*Jesus came near and spoke to them, "I've received all authority in heaven and on earth. 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, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age."*

- How might Jesus' mandates in Mt 25 and Mt 28 be joined in one missional way?
- How is "being with the least of these" and "going to make disciples" part of the same mission?

Romans 1.14-17 (Paul)

*I have a responsibility both to Greeks and to those who don't speak Greek, both to the wise and to the foolish. That's why I'm ready to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome. I'm not ashamed of the **gospel: it is God's own power for salvation to all who have faith in God**, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. God's righteousness is being revealed in the gospel, from faithfulness for faith, as it is written, "The righteous person will live by faith."*

- How is it that the power of the gospel to "save" come from one who was executed as a criminal?

Week 10:

Philippians 2.2, 5-8

*Complete my joy by thinking the same way, having the same love, being united, and agreeing with each other... **Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus:** Though he was in the form of God, he did not consider being equal with God something to exploit. But **he emptied himself** by taking the form of a slave and by becoming like human beings. When he found himself in the form of a human, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

- What are the ways we live, as disciples of Jesus, in self-emptying love?
- How is the way of self-emptying love redemptive for others?

Ephesians 1.4

*He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world **to be holy and blameless before him in love.***

- How do we live to be holy and blameless in love?
- How does loving give a particular character to holiness? What is holiness otherwise?

Week 11:

Ephesians 1.9-10

*He has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, **to gather up all things in him**, things in heaven and things on earth.*

- If the mystery of God's plan is to gather all things in him, then how is God's plan carried out in the mission of our church?

Ephesians 2.8-10

*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God— **not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.***

- What are the characteristics of this "way of life" for which God created us and gifted us?

Week 12:

Ephesians 5.

*Therefore, **be imitators of God**, as beloved children, and **live in love**, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

- How do we as individuals and as a church imitate God?

What is our mission as the church of Jesus Christ and how do we accomplish it?

Week 13:

Matthew 4.17, 23

*Jesus began to announce, "**Change your hearts and lives! Here comes the kingdom of heaven!**" ...*

Jesus traveled throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues. He announced the good news of the kingdom and healed every disease and sickness among the people.

- If the whole person and mission of Jesus was to bring in God's kingdom then and now, how are we to join Jesus' mission?

Luke 9.1-2, 6

*Jesus called the Twelve together and he gave them power and authority over all demons and to heal sicknesses. **He sent them out to proclaim God's kingdom and to heal the sick...** They departed and went through the villages proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.*

- In our daily walk of life, how are we proclaiming God's reign of grace and healing the sick?

Week 13:

Luke 10.1

*After these things, **the Lord commissioned seventy-two others** and sent them on ahead in pairs to every city and place he was about to go. He said to them, "**The harvest is bigger than you can imagine, but there are few workers. Therefore, plead with the Lord of the harvest to send out workers for his harvest...Heal the sick who are there, and say to them, 'God's kingdom has come upon you.'**"*

- How might we see the signs in our own ministry that God's harvest is bigger than we can imagine?

Acts 1.8

*You will receive power when the **Holy Spirit** has come upon you, and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

- How are we allowing the Holy Spirit to power our witness?

Week 14:

Acts 3. 25

You are the heirs of the prophets and the covenant that God made with your ancestors when he told Abraham, "Through your descendants, all the families on earth will be blessed."
(Gen 12.3)

- How does this mission sound familiar?

Galatians 2 (Paul)

*I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but **it is Christ who lives in me.** And the life I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God,** who loved me and gave himself for me.*

- What can it mean for us as persons and as a church to be crucified with Christ?

- How will we live as Christ who lives in us?

Week 15:

Galatians 5.16, 22-23

Live by the Spirit...the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

- How will we live out the fruit of the Spirit in our daily walk?

Ephesians 5.8-9

Live as children of light— for the fruit of the light is found in all that is good and right and true.

- How will we join in all the is good and right and true?

Week 16:

Romans 12 (selected verses)

*In the same way, though there are many of us, **we are one body in Christ**, and individually **we belong to each other**... **Love each other like the members of your family**. Be the best at showing honor to each other... Be happy in your hope, stand your ground when you're in trouble, and devote yourselves to prayer. Contribute to the needs of God's people, and **welcome strangers into your home**... Be happy with those who are happy, and cry with those who are crying. Consider everyone as equal, and don't think that you're better than anyone else. Instead, associate with people who have no status. Don't think that you're so smart. Don't pay back anyone for their evil actions with evil actions, but show respect for what everyone else believes is good. If possible, to the best of your ability, **live at peace with all people**.*

- How does belonging to the body of Christ enable us to live this code of ethics?