

Why Do We Talk So Much About Missions?

Message 1 of 5 in the series: "Why Do We Do That?"

A. Jesus gave us the mission of being His witnesses everywhere.

"But you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And **you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me **everywhere**—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8 (NLT)

1. We need to be good witnesses and testify (tell people the Good news) about Jesus everywhere.

"A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria... But **the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.**"

Acts 8:1b & 4 (NLT)

2. We need to bear witness to our new lives in Jesus by loving and serving others everywhere.

"Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means **caring for orphans and widows in their distress** and refusing to let the world corrupt you... What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don't show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, and you say, 'Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well'—but then you don't give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. Now someone may argue, 'Some people have faith; others have good deeds.' But I say, 'How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? **I will show you my faith by my good deeds.**' You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror." James 1:27 & 2:14-19 (NLT)

3. The Holy Spirit will supply the power we need to be good witnesses for Jesus everywhere.

"So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. **May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do.**"

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NLT)

B. When we talk about "missions," we're referring to people, ministries, and organizations that our church partners with to help us stay outward focused and "on mission" locally, regionally, and globally.

"And **you will be my witnesses**, telling people about me **everywhere**—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8b (NLT)

1. Some of the missions we talk about help us meet urgent needs and serve people in our own community.

"Be careful to live properly among your **unbelieving neighbors**. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world." 1 Peter 2:12 (NLT)

2. Some of the missions we talk about help us share the Good News of Jesus in the River Region, Alabama, and Southeastern United States.

"Then he (Paul) held daily discussions at the lecture hall of Tyrannus. This went on for the next two years, so that **people throughout the province of Asia**—both Jews and Greeks—heard the word of the Lord." Acts 19:9b-10 (NLT)

3. Some of the missions we talk about help us teach people to be faithful followers of Jesus in other parts of the world.

"This letter is from Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ. I have been sent to proclaim faith to those God has chosen and to teach them to know the truth that shows them how to live godly lives... I am writing to Titus, my true son in the faith that we share. May God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior give you grace and peace. **I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there...**" Titus 1:1 & 4-5a (NLT)

“Therefore, **go and make disciples of all the nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you.”
Matthew 28:19-20a (NLT)

C. Four ways all of us can be involved in missions:

1. We can pray.

“The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; **ask him to send out more workers into his fields.**” Matthew 9:37b-38 (NLT)

“Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. And pray for me, too. **Ask God to give me the right words** so I can boldly explain God’s mysterious plan that the Good News is for Jews and Gentiles alike. I am in chains now, still preaching this message as God’s ambassador. So **pray that I will keep on speaking boldly for him**, as I should.” Ephesians 6:18-20 (NLT)

2. We can give.

“Dear friend, you are being faithful to God when you care for the traveling teachers who pass through, even though they are strangers to you. They have told the church here of your loving friendship. Please continue providing for such teachers in a manner that pleases God. For they are traveling for the Lord, and they accept nothing from people who are not believers. So **we ourselves should support them so that we can be their partners** as they teach the truth.”
3 John 1:5-8 (NLT)

3. We can go.

“**Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.** And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.” Hebrews 10:24-25 (NLT)

“Then I heard the Lord asking, ‘Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?’ I said, ‘**Here I am. Send me.**’” Isaiah 6:8 (NLT)

4. We can lead.

“Timothy, my dear son, be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other **trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.**”
2 Timothy 2:1-2 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word “missions”?
2. Read 1 Peter 2:12. Can we be missionaries right where we are? If so, how?
3. Read Acts 1:8 & Matthew 28:19-20. Do you know someone who is a missionary? If so, describe them. Why did they go? What do they do? What made them qualified?
4. Read Matthew 9:37-38 & Ephesians 6:18-20. How can we pray meaningful prayers for missionaries and unreached people groups?
5. Read Romans 10:13-15 & 3 John 1:5-8. Have you ever supported a missionary financially? If so, why?
6. A friend of yours calls one day with a question about a fundraising letter she received from your teenage son who is going on a short-term mission trip with Centerpoint this summer. “You know I love Bobby,” she begins, “but honestly, I am struggling with supporting him financially on his mission trip. Why do a group of high school kids from Alabama need to travel all the way to Peru to do ministry? Wouldn’t it be more efficient to send a check and let the people in Peru use it however they want?” How do you respond? Why do you think Centerpoint views short-term mission trips as valuable ways to help people stay outward focused and “on-mission”? (Hebrews 10:24-25)

7. Discuss the following steps we can take to get involved in missions:

Step 1 - We can pray.

Step 2 - We can give.

Step 3 – We can go.

Step 4 – We can lead.

Which step might God be challenging you to take?