

Our Mission Continues Until Jesus Returns Regardless of Our Circumstances

Lesson 04 of the series "Foundations"

1. Jesus gave us a mission to work on until He returns.

"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. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

a. Jesus promised to help us.

"...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)

b. Jesus won't return until our mission is complete.

"the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come." Matthew 24:14 (NLT)

c. We should be doing what we can to hurry Jesus' return along.

"...what holy and godly lives you should live, looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along."
2 Peter 3:11-12 (NLT)

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander." 1 Peter 3:15 (NLT)

2. Our mission continues regardless of our circumstances.

"Preach the word of God. Be prepared, whether the time is favorable or not. Patiently correct, rebuke, and encourage your people with good teaching. For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear. They will reject the truth and chase after myths. But you should keep a clear mind in every situation. Don't be afraid of suffering for the Lord. Work at telling others the Good News, and fully carry out the ministry God has given you." 2 Timothy 4:2-4 (NLT)

a. As we carry out our mission, we should expect problems and difficult circumstances.

"Stay alert. This is hazardous work I'm assigning you. You're going to be like sheep running through a wolf pack, so don't call attention to yourselves. Be as cunning as a snake, inoffensive as a dove. Don't be naive. Some people will impugn your motives, others will smear your reputation—just because you believe in me."
Matthew 10:16-18 (MSG)

b. As we carry out our mission, we should expect problems and difficult circumstances to open doors for us.

"Don't be upset when they haul you before the civil authorities. Without knowing it, they've done you... a favor, given you a platform for preaching the kingdom news! And don't worry about what you'll say or how you'll say it. The right words will be there; the Spirit of your Father will supply the words."
Matthew 10:19-20 (NLT)

"Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear."
Philippians 1:12-14 (NIV)

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. 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. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)

3. We need to pray about our mission every day.

- a. We need to ask God to send workers who will join us.

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” Luke 10:2 (NIV)

- b. We need to ask God for opportunities and creativity.

“Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.” Colossians 4:2-4 (NIV)

- c. We need to ask God for courage, boldness, and the right words.

“Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.” Ephesians 6:19-20 (NIV)

“‘Lord, consider their threats and enable your servants to speak your word with great boldness. Stretch out your hand to heal and perform signs and wonders through the name of your holy servant Jesus.’ After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.” Acts 4:29-31 (NIV)

- d. We need to ask God for protection.

“Pray, too, that we will be rescued from wicked and evil people, for not everyone is a believer. But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one.” 2 Thessalonians 3:2-3 (NLT)

- e. We need to ask God for wisdom.

“If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” James 1:5 (NIV)

John Schmidt • 06-07-20 • john@centeringlives.com

Connect Group Questions

1. Read Matthew 28:19-20. How do these verses make you feel?
2. Would you describe yourself as someone who lives on mission for Jesus? Why? Why not?
3. Read Acts 1:8. What does “receiving power” from the Holy Spirit to be a witness for Jesus look like?
4. Read Matthew 24:14 & 2 Peter 3:3-15. How could we “hurry along” Jesus’ return?
5. Read Philippians 1:12-14 & Matthew 5:14-16. How might God use us as His witnesses while nationwide protests are going on during a global pandemic?
6. Read 1 Peter 3:15 & 2 Timothy 4:2-4. What do you think it looks like to be ready/prepared to give reasons for your faith in Jesus?
7. Discuss the following prayer requests regarding our mission:
 - We need to ask God to send willing workers who will join us. (Luke 10:2)
 - We need to ask God for opportunities and creativity. (Colossians 4:2-4)
 - We need to ask God for courage, boldness, and the right words. (Ephesians 6:19-20)
 - We need to ask God for protection. (2 Thessalonians 3:2-3)
 - We need to ask God for wisdom. (James 1:5)

Which of these prayer requests do you need most?

8. Spend some time as a group praying through the requests listed in question #7.