

# Evangelism and Missions

By Vern Charette

## Pre-Session Assignments

One week before the session, participants will take the following assignments.

### Assignment One

Read the comments related to Genesis 3:15 in the section **It's in the Book**. Also read Revelation 12:1–4. Prepare to share your answers to the following question: Since the woman is Israel, and Jesus is her “child” (or seed) that she is bringing forth, why do you think the “red dragon” (or Satan) stands ready to devour the child when He is born?

### Assignment Two

Read the comments related to Luke 24:48–49 in the section **It's in the Book**. Also read Acts 1:4–8. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: According to Luke, what is a primary purpose for the filling of the Spirit?

### Assignment Three

Read the comments related to “Motivation for Evangelism and Missions” in the section **It's in the Book**. Also read Matthew 5:13–16. Prepare to share your answer to the following question: What is the ultimate motivation given by Jesus for being salt and light?

### Scripture to Memorize

*“Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you.’”* John 20:21

### Session Goal

Consistent with God’s Word and in the power of the Holy Spirit—by the end of this session, disciples will understand the biblical basis for evangelism and missions and the reason for their invitation to participate with God in reaching the world.

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## It's in the Book

30 minutes

### Real-Life Scenario

*Who cares?* Sam thought, although he would never say it out loud. He had just heard yet another sermon by his pastor challenging them to “take the gospel to the nations” (yawn). But truth be told, Sam had better things to do. To start with, he had plans to play ball with his boys later that afternoon, not to mention the fact that he intended to get back to his conquest to save the universe from another attack—all from the comfort of his basement, complete with high-definition projection. Can you identify with any of Sam’s thoughts?

Read Genesis 3:1–24 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 1. Now the serpent was more crafty.** In the Hebrew text the word for *crafty* carries the idea of being cunning or shrewd. We might say this serpent was more “slick” than the others. The word *serpent* or snake appears five times in this chapter and certainly is a reference to more than just an ordinary snake, especially in light of New Testament passages that speak about Satan (i.e., John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; and Revelation 12:9–11).

**Verse 4. the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.”** Jesus called Satan “the father of lies” (John 8:44). Here we see the snake directly contradicting God’s original word to Adam in Genesis 2:17. The deception here was blatant, and it led to dire consequences not only for Adam and Eve but also for the rest of humanity. The moment Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they were separated from God spiritually. Since they were removed from the tree of life (vv. 22–24), they also began the process of physical death immediately. There are two kinds of death in the Scripture, physical and spiritual. Both are a separation.

**Verse 9. “Where are you?”** Do not miss the tremendous act of grace depicted in this question from God as He called out to His wayward children. Remember, Adam and Eve had just fallen into sin and had run away from God rather than toward Him. In verse 8, God made a move toward them, and in verse 9, He called out to them. The question is not just one of geography—this is a spiritual question as well. Believers need to see the grace of God moving Him toward fallen humanity at this juncture in the narrative.

**Verse 15. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.** In the midst of God pronouncing the consequences of sin (vv. 14–24), God gave what has been traditionally called the *protoevangelium* or “first gospel proclamation.” To make the meaning clearer, some translations of the Bible use the word “crush” instead of “bruise” in the first phrase. In short, what we have is a clear promise from God to destroy Satan one day through the seed (the offspring) of the woman. From this point the seed of the woman will be traced through the entire Old Testament, ultimately culminating in Jesus.

### Assignment One Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment One** during the week can now report on why Satan tried various times throughout the Old Testament to extinguish Israel and why Herod was motivated to kill Jesus as an infant.

### Discussion Questions

How have Adam and Eve's descendants been affected by original sin? What role did Satan play in the fall of mankind? What is the picture of God's grace and heart painted on the canvas of Genesis 3?

### On Your Own

In the space below, write the most surprising truth you discovered (or were reminded of) from the Genesis 3 passage.

Read Luke 24:44–49 out loud.

### Studying the Passage

**Verse 44. everything written about Me . . . must be fulfilled.** When Jesus spoke of the “Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms,” He was designating the totality of the Old Testament cannon. The “things which are written” and “fulfilled” are the scores of prophecies concerning His incarnation, death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus fulfilled more than three hundred messianic prophecies, further proving He was and is the Son of God sent forth by God for mankind's salvation.

**Verse 47. and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations.** The fact that the Old Testament prophesied that the gospel would be preached to all the nations reveals it was always God's intention to include every people group in salvation. The nation Israel had failed to understand that they were called to be “a light of the nations” (Isaiah 49:6). Thus, Jesus came forth to be that light (Luke 2:32).

**Verse 48. You are witnesses.** God's original plan to save people by the preaching of the gospel was given to the disciples of Jesus. They were given this primary mission on earth. This mission for the church, the body of disciples, has not changed.

**Verse 49. power from on high.** Since this is a monumental task, Jesus also gives a promise of supernatural power. **promise of My Father.** This is an Old Testament reference to the Spirit who would one day indwell every believer. Luke continued to write in Acts 2 about how the early disciples were filled with Spirit in order to be witnesses.

### Assignment Two Feedback

The person who completed **Assignment Two** during the week can now report on a primary purpose for the filling of the Spirit.

### **Discussion Questions**

Was God's plan to send Jesus to die on the cross and to one day indwell believers by His Spirit only a New Testament idea? How vital is being filled with the Spirit to being on mission with God?

### **On Your Own**

In the space below, list various ways the Spirit is at work when the gospel is shared.

## **The Motivation for Evangelism and Missions**

Seeing lost people come to Christ for salvation offers many benefits. If we are not careful, we will make the "fringe benefits" the reason for wanting to be on mission with God. Our desire to see men and women come to faith in Christ should be rooted in the heart of God. God is clearly a missionary God. A study of the purposes of God will reveal that His glory is primary in everything He does. We should want to be on mission with God because when the nations are saved, God is glorified. It should be the heartbeat of the Christian.

### **Assignment Three Feedback**

The person who completed **Assignment Three** during the week can now report on the ultimate motivation given by Jesus for being salt and light.

### **Discussion Questions**

What are some of the "fringe benefits" when a person is saved? What role do you think motivation plays in obedience? What is the heartbeat of God?

### **On Your Own**

Think long and hard about the heart of God. Ask yourself if you have His heart for the nations and if reaching them is worth the sacrifice. What are some things you might have to give up in order to be on mission with God? What will you gain? List a few of each.

## **Heart and Hands**

8 minutes

Read again the **Real-Life Scenario** near the beginning of the lesson. Consider whether your answers have changed during the session.

Be silent for two or three minutes. Thank Jesus for His sacrifice and for the gospel. Adore Him for His glorious reign on the throne of heaven. Then ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you:

1. A way the Scriptures you studied today will change your heart for the glory of Christ.
2. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to stop doing something for the glory of Christ.
3. Or a way those Scriptures will lead you to do something for the glory of Christ.

Write what the Spirit reveals to you below, and then be ready to share what you have written with the group.

## **Since Last Week**

5 minutes

## **Grace-Filled Accountability**

5 minutes

## **Planning for Evangelism, Missions, and Service**

5 minutes

## **Prayer**

7 minutes

## **At Home: Nail It Down**

The two major passages studied yielded several truths concerning evangelism and missions.

- Genesis 3:1–24 makes clear that from the beginning Satan was the cause of mankind's fall. Adam and Eve's sin plunged the entire human race into sin and death. God showed His grace toward Adam and Eve in that He sought them out in their rebellion against Him. God proclaimed for the first time the good news that He is going to provide salvation and destroy Satan through "the seed" (Jesus).

- In Luke 24:44–49 Jesus gave His disciples some final words concerning their mission on earth. Even though He was about to depart from them, He reminded them that everything that happened, including His death and resurrection, had been foretold in the Old Testament. He revealed that God's plan to reach the nations by preaching the gospel was also a part of God's original plan, and it was the mission of His followers. In order to carry out this massive mission, Jesus reminded them of the promise of the Spirit that would empower them for the task.

Mankind is fallen and in a current state of spiritual death. From the beginning, God determined to provide Jesus for salvation and to allow the church to participate in the mission of reaching the lost with the gospel through the power of the Holy Spirit.

God is a missionary God. His heart is, and has always been, to reach the nations with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ. Our ultimate motivation to evangelize the lost is rooted in God and a desire to see Him glorified among the nations. Being on mission with God will never be boring and provides a passion and purpose in life that yields eternal dividends.

### **Follow up Question**

*What are several ways we can participate in God's missionary mission right now?*

The Making Disciples curriculum is a gift from Southwestern Seminary to those who, for the glory of the Father and in the power of the Spirit, will spend a lifetime embracing the full supremacy of the Son, responding to His kingly reign in all of life, inviting Christ to live His life through them, and joining Him in making disciples among all peoples.