

A. HOPE: Found in Christ & His Resurrection

Romans 1:6–7 (NIV) *And you also are among those Gentiles who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be his holy people: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

READ ROMANS 1:6, 11, 16, 17 → Belong to Jesus, Gifts of Spirit, Not ashamed of Gospel, Live by FAITH

1 Corinthians 15:20–26 (NIV) *But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power...The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

John 16:33 (NIV) *“I have told you these things, so that in me (in CHRIST) you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”*

Context: Jesus told them they would suffer for His Name. He promised the Holy Spirit would be with them. He was going to the Father. They would have to wait for His return.

Psalms 146:3–5 (NIV) ³ *Do not put your trust in princes, in human beings, who cannot save.* ⁴ *When their spirit departs, they return to the ground; on that very day their plans come to nothing.* ⁵ *Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God.*

IF your hope is in this world. You will not have lasting hope. It will not endure change or hardship. E.g. covid, and a church split taught us this.

B. Mission Statement: Be Bold as you Love & Disciple People to Jesus

Matthew 28:18–20 (ESV) ¹⁸ *And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”*

Historical Cultural Context: The Roman Empire. Vile. Rampant idolatry, sexual sin, pedophilia, infanticide, and persecution were rampant; people were forced to bend a knee to Rome, and religious freedom existed in a bubble.

Jesus did not CALL THE CHURCH to hide in caves, or buildings, no! He called them GO!!

Current Culture: Christians have been called to faithful witness in the darkest areas since the beginning. This call remains today. It was given “until the end of the age.” Until Jesus returns!

Acts 1:6–8 (ESV) ⁶ *So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

- WAIT for the Holy Spirit to give them BOLDNESS, TRUTH, GRACE, POWER to WITNESS

Acts 4; 5:27-32 READ → Boldness came from God, prayed for boldness, obey God over culture

For example, Terrell gave his life to Jesus. The Spirit brought him to life! And would give him thoughts to “go talk to that person,” “go share your faith,” and... rather than QUENCH the Spirit, he would ask for PRAYER, then “walk in step with the Spirit.” This fire still burns strong in Terrell. Why? Because he continues to follow Spirit's leading.

Genuine faith IN Jesus PRODUCES faithfulness TO Jesus

For example, Perpetua and the Gladiator (203 AD). Perpetua was a young, noblewoman in Carthage who died for her faith in Jesus. Her joy during her imprisonment and even as she entered the arena was so profound that it became a public testimony.

- **The Joy:** Eyewitness accounts say she walked into the amphitheatre "with a shining countenance and calm step," as if she were a bride going to a wedding rather than a victim to a beast.
- **The Transformation:** The officer in charge of the prison, **Pudens**, began to show them great honor because he "perceived that the power of God was in them."
- **The Result:** Before her death, she famously guided the trembling hand of a young gladiator to her own throat when he failed to kill her cleanly. Her steadiness and lack of fear led many in the crowd and members of the prison guard to convert to Christianity shortly after.

For example, the "Laughter" of Sabina Wurmbrand (OPEN DOORS): Richard's wife, Sabina, was sent to a labor camp on the Danube Canal. The women were forced to do back-breaking labor in freezing mud.

- **The Joy:** Sabina and other women would sing hymns while working in the mud. When a guard asked why they were happy in such misery, Sabina replied that they were working for a "higher Master" who loved them.
- **The Transformation:** The guards were used to prisoners who cursed them or begged for mercy. The "joyful dignity" of these women made the guards feel spiritually impoverished.
- **The Result:** Several guards became "secret believers," slipping extra rations to the prisoners and eventually assisting in the underground church movement after their service ended.

Even. Unto. Death. Revelation 12:11 (ESV) ¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

BEFORE Pentecost, the disciples shrank away when their faith was challenged... in fact, only JOHN, the beloved disciple, Mary and some other women were there. The rest? Fled.

AFTER Pentecost, the disciples engaged in MISSION and laid down their lives for it. ALL but John died violently.

REFLECT: If you knew you couldn't FAIL. What would you do for JESUS? E.g. fully commit to getting rid of pornography? Other sin or addictions? Share your faith with a coworker? Stand up for TRUTH at work? Befriend the kid no one else likes at school? Start a ministry for those rescued from sex trafficking? Defend the unborn? Other?

HOPE in Christ → BOLDNESS from the Spirit → PRAYER & SUPPORT from your Community → GO & DO IT! LIVE BY FAITH on MISSION!

C. Mission Field: Home, Marketplace, Schools, Government, & Beyond

The MAIN focus of our mission is: Love God, love people, Be disciplined, Make Disciples (GC2)

Five Questions for Life on Mission: (Colson Fellows)

1. Who do I know that needs Jesus? EACH ONE, REACH ONE (CULTURE is BIG – WHO IS IN FRONT OF YOU – START THERE.)
2. What's good that we can promote, celebrate and preserve?
3. What's missing that we can contribute?
4. What's evil that we can stop?
5. What's broken that we can restore?

Matthew 10:16–33 (ESV) ¹⁶ *“Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves... ¹⁹ When they deliver you over, do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say, for what you are to say will be given to you in that hour. ²⁰ For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you... ³⁰ But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Fear not, therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.*

FIRST: Do not be ANXIOUS – The HOLY SPIRIT is WITH/IN us and will give what we need!

SECOND: Do not FEAR – You BELONG TO JESUS!

Mission Fields → Home, Marketplace, School, Government (& beyond):

1. Family & Friends– missions begin at home!

We are called to raise up our families in the admonition of the Lord. We are all discipling our families. The question we must answer. **Who are what are we discipling them to become like?**

Deuteronomy 6:4–9 (ESV) *“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.*

Matthew 10:21 (ESV) ²¹ *Brother will deliver brother over to death, and the father his child, and children will rise against parents and have them put to death,*

- **Approach:** Modelling, prayer, love, presence, intentionality, share & obey Scripture
- **Question:** what are you currently modelling to your family & friends?

2. The Marketplace and Schools

Acts 19:9–10 (ESV) *... he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. 10 This continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.*

Acts 17:16–17 (ESV) *Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols. So he reasoned in the synaquoque with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there.*

When addressing Greeks or Romans, the disciples couldn't start with the Hebrew Scriptures because the audience didn't view them as authoritative. THIS IS TRUE TODAY.

- **Approach:** They appealed to "General Revelation"—nature, logic, and even Greek poetry—to establish the existence of one Creator God.
- **Romans 1:19–20 (ESV)** For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.
- **Question:** Do you know why you believe? Do you know why those around you do NOT believe? Sign up Colson Fellows, read a book on apologetics, study the Bible

3. Government & Religious institutions

Acts 26:28–29 (ESV) *And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?" And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains."*

- **CULTURE:** NO CHURCH in politics! And do not judge other religions! (except ours)
- **Approach:** Prove that Christianity is not evil through "actively living as a Christian" & demonstrating the Truth of Christianity over ALL other worldviews & religions
- **Question:** Are you using your votes & voice to advance Christ's Kingdom? Or your own?
- **Get Involved:** Sign petitions, advocate for Christian morality, contact MP's, show love to those believe differently, but share TRUTH. We have the BEST NEWS EVER!

Genuine faith IN Jesus PRODUCES faithfulness TO Jesus

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV) ¹⁵ but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,

D. Steps to Be Discipled & Make Disciples:

1. **Confess:** If you are stuck in sin. Don't wait. Join a group and get accountability
2. **Sign up:** Get involved in Colson Fellows this year! Get equipped for our Culture
3. **Abide:** Get some friends and go through The Way: Abide in Christ – grow in prayer, Scripture, obedience & understanding
4. **Church:** Invite a friend! Next week – Apologetics for Jesus & the Resurrection, then – the Gospel at Easter, then Next Steps for Thriving Faith, Baptism, Set Free, and Worship Night!