

# OUR MISSION: WHAT DO WE DO TO FULFILL OUR PURPOSE?

## Discipleship Message #2

**Last Sunday (our first as a church) we studied what the Bible says about our purpose.**

- Why are we here—as a church (why did we start yet another church in Kansas City?) and as individuals?
- Our Purpose: To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
- That was good place to start, but it left us with a question: How do we do that? That is our mission...

### **Our Mission**

- This morning we want to see what the Bible says about what we are to do in order to fulfill our life's purpose of glorifying God and enjoying Him forever.
- To state it clearly and simply: Our mission (as a church and as individuals) is to be and make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - ✓ This is the only way to glorify God, and therefore it is the only way to enjoy Him now and forever.

**This message also brings up a secondary issue that will be very important for our church** (so we'll spend some time now on this, and then we'll come back to it later): Our vocabulary.

- We use words and phrases all the time, and words and phrases communicate ideas (rightly or wrongly).
  - ✓ Words have meaning, and therefore I believe it is very important that we choose our words with care.
- Let me give you an example before we talk about words we use to refer to discipleship: “Accept Jesus.”
  - ✓ We (as modern evangelicals) tend to throw that phrase around like it was actually biblical, when it is not. And, to make matters worse, that phrase communicates bad doctrine about salvation.
  - ✓ Someone might say, “But, John 1.12 says...” Yes, John 1.12 says one must receive Christ, not “accept” Him (different word and words communicate meaning).
  - ✓ The problem is the confusion that is caused when one reads passages like Ephesians 1.6: We are accepted by God (He accepts us in the Beloved; we don't “accept” Him).
  - ✓ So in this example we see that our soteriology (doctrine of salvation) can change drastically based on the words and phrases we use (we may know what we want to say, but what are we communicating?).
    1. Bad Soteriology: Jesus is weak and effeminate, and He is “knocking on the door of your heart” saying, “Oh, please, accept me into your heart!”
    2. Good soteriology: God, the Sovereign Creator and Ruler of the universe, is angry with the wicked every day and He will pour out his wrath upon all workers of iniquity. But, if a sinner will respond to God's offer of clemency (forgiveness and pardon) by repenting of his sins and trusting in the Son, God will accept that sinner (based on the Person and work of the Son).
  - ✓ Words communicate meaning and so we should select and define our words carefully and biblically.
  - ✓ This same principle applies this morning to our Mission in life of being and making disciples...

**When we speak of “discipleship” we often use terms that divorce discipleship from evangelism.**

- We speak of “evangelism and discipleship,” and by so doing we communicate the idea that the two are different and distinct, when in actuality they are not as distinct as that phrase might indicate.
- Evangelism forms part of discipleship: Evangelism is the beginning and the end of discipleship.
  - ✓ Discipleship begins with evangelism because that is how a disciple is made (“created”).
  - ✓ Discipleship ends with evangelism because that is the goal in discipleship: to make (“mold”) a person into a disciple-maker (someone who evangelizes to make a disciple and then helps him mature).

- Here's the problem: If we divorce evangelism from discipleship, then there will be those of us who feel more comfortable “discipling” believers and then we can justify leaving the irksome work of evangelizing the lost to those who have the “gift of evangelism.”
  - ✓ Side note: There is no gift of evangelism in the Bible. It's the evangelist who is the gift to the Body.
- We are all called to the uncomfortable work of evangelizing the lost. And we are all called to help other believers grow in the faith and become more like Christ.
- So, we need to take care to use words that communicate what the Bible says about our Mission, and I believe there are two...

### **Our Mission (to be and make disciples) has two aspects: Evangelism and Edification.**

- When we speak about discipleship, we need to get used to using these terms because they communicate a simple picture of biblical discipleship in the Church Age.
  - ✓ Evangelism: A disciple is made, in the sense of created, through evangelism.
  - ✓ Edification: A disciple is made, in the sense of molded (formed), through edification.
  - ✓ Both together (evangelism and edification) form what we call “discipleship” (i.e., making disciples).
- These same two terms (evangelism and edification) apply to “being” a disciple, also.
  - ✓ To “be” a disciple we have to first be saved (respond to the Gospel presented through evangelism).
  - ✓ To “be” a disciple we have to also grow in sanctification (respond to the Word to be edified).
  - ✓ Only then (when we are “being” disciples) can we go and make disciples of others.

### **Now we go back to our analogy of last week: Our purpose is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.**

- When we live in such a way as to glorify God, we will be enjoying Him now and forever.
  - ✓ If we aren't really enjoying the Lord right now, chances are we aren't really living how we should—we aren't really living in a way that glorifies Him.
- Now we can tie this in with the Mission: To glorify God and enjoy Him forever, we must be and make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - ✓ We must be disciples: We must be saved and growing in sanctification (evangelism and edification).
  - ✓ We must make disciples: We must be evangelizing the lost and edifying the saved.
- If we are not really enjoying God right now, we need to ask ourselves:
  - ✓ Am I “being” a disciple of Jesus? (Am I saved? Am I growing in sanctification?)
  - ✓ Am I “making” disciples of Jesus? (Am I evangelizing the lost and edifying other believers?)
- If we are not actively and intentionally participating in the Mission (being and making disciples), we are not living according to the purpose for which God designed us.
  - ✓ And that means life simply does not work the way it should (according to God's plan).

### **So, with that brief introduction in mind, let's see what the Bible says about our Mission of being and making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.**

- What does Scripture say about the work of evangelism and edification?

#### **I. Our Mission: Be a Disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ**

**A. Salvation (evangelism):** In order to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, we must be saved.

1. We aren't going to spend a lot of time here this morning because, after this first series on discipleship, I'd like to study a little bit about evangelism and salvation (our second series at HBC).

2. Obviously, we don't need to be saved to **glorify** God. God will be glorified even in the wicked.
  - a) God's existence and His attributes (specifically His goodness and justice) will be declared and magnified when the wicked are judged and cast into the lake of fire.
  - b) It is good and right to punish law-breakers for their crimes. And God will do just that.
3. However, we will never **enjoy** God outside of salvation in the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - a) (Ps 5.5; 7.11) God hates all those who do bad things and He is angry with them every day.
  - b) And on behalf of the lost sinners, the feeling is mutual:
    - (1) (Ps 2.1-3) They, too, are angry with God and they shake their little fists in His face refusing to submit to His right rule over His creation.
    - (2) (Rom 1.30) Lost sinners (every one of them) hate the one, true God of the Bible.
4. (Rom 5.8-11) Therefore, the only way to both **glorify** God and **enjoy** Him forever is to be **saved** by the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Fulfilling our purpose begins with salvation.

**B. Sanctification (edification):** In order to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, we must be growing in Christ—being conformed to His image—in both character and conduct.

1. (Rom 8.29) God's will, desire, and goal is that we all be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus.
  - a) (Gal 5.22-23) God wants us to be like Jesus in character.
  - b) (1Jn 2.6; 1Pet 2.21) God wants us to be like Jesus in conduct.
2. (Php 1.6) Obviously God will not be thwarted in this desire; He will be glorified in conforming us to the image of Christ.
  - a) But, if you choose the route of not cooperating with God, you'll not be fulfilling your purpose because you won't be enjoying God in the sanctification process.
  - b) (Heb 12.9-11) God will bring you to maturity kicking and screaming if He has to.
3. The way to both **glorify** God and **enjoy** Him now and forever is to willingly, actively, and intentionally participate with Him in the sanctification (edification) process.
  - We'll talk more about just how we do this later, in a few weeks.

**C. Summary & Review:** Our Mission starts with being disciples.

1. Evangelism results in salvation: To glorify and enjoy God forever, we must be saved.
2. Edification in our lives results in sanctification: To glorify and enjoy God forever, we must grow in sanctification (becoming more and more like Christ each day, in both character and conduct).
3. But, our mission doesn't end here...

## II. Our Mission: Make Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ

**A. (John 17.4) In order to glorify God on earth, we must finish the work God gave us to do.**

1. (Eph 2.10) When God saved us, He created us specifically for good works—works He ordained (designed) for us to do as part of our “lifestyle” (our “walk” in this world).
2. In order to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, we need to live according to this mission. We need to do the works God has given us to do on this earth. What are these works?
  - a) (Eph 4.11-16) They are the “works of the ministry” (v12) that result in the growth and edification of the Church, the Body of Christ (v16).
  - b) These works are the works of discipleship: Evangelism and Edification—leading the lost to salvation in Christ and then helping the saved to grow in sanctification in Christ.

**B. (2Cor 5.17-21) God has called each and every one of us to the work of evangelism.**

1. Evangelism has very little to do with “gifts” and rather a lot to do with “calling.”
2. God has called every one that has been reconciled to actively and intentionally participate in the ministry of reconciliation (getting the word of reconciliation out to the lost).
3. Through evangelism a disciple is “made,” in the sense of “created.” And therefore we (all of us) fulfill the Great Commission by evangelizing the lost.

**C. God has also called each and every one of us to the work of edification.**

1. (Gal 4.19) Just as we are to actively and intentionally evangelize, so should we work (actively and intentionally) at helping other believers grow in Christ.
2. (Eph 4.12-13) God wants all Christians to become like the “perfect Man,” Jesus Christ.
  - a) (Eph 4.14) He wants His children to grow to maturity.
  - b) (Eph 4.15) He wants His children to grow up and be like Christ.
  - c) (Eph 4.16) And He expects all of us to participate with Him in this ministry of edification by helping other believers grow in Christ-likeness (called: edification).
3. Through edification a disciple is “made,” in the sense of “molded”—formed into the image of Christ (little by little, day by day, in character and conduct).
  - a) We (all of us) fulfill the Great Commission by edifying other believers.
  - b) We are expected by the Lord to help other saints grow in Christ, to grow to spiritual maturity, so that they can in turn evangelize the lost and edify other believers.

**Conclusion:** Our Mission is to be and make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**If we want to glorify God and enjoy Him forever (including enjoying Him now), this is how we do that.**

1. We need to be disciples: We must be saved and growing in sanctification (holiness, growing in Christ).
2. We need to make disciples: Evangelizing the lost and edifying the saved.
  - (1Tim 2.3-4) This is what God wants for all lost sinners: evangelism, salvation
  - (Rom 8.29) This is what God wants for all saved sinners: edification, sanctification.
  - (Luke 6.40) This is the work commonly referred to as “discipleship”: Being and making disciples.

**(John 17.4) Discipleship (evangelism and edification) is our Mission:** It is the work God expects us to do on this earth in order to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever.

**So, as we finish, just ask yourself: Am I enjoying God right now? (If not, why not?) Am I living in a way that glorifies God? (If not, why not?)**

1. We need to be disciples: Saved and growing in sanctification. Are you?
2. We need to make disciples: Evangelizing the lost and edifying the saved. Are you doing that?

**This is why we started Harvest Baptist Church:**

- So that we, as individuals and as a church family, can glorify God and enjoy Him now and forever by being and making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- That is our purpose and that is our mission. That is what we aim to do.