

MISSIONAL LIVING

Making disciples requires intentional, regular, and missional engagement. Disciples are not made by accident, but by prayerful action. In this lesson, we will examine the scriptures to notice some principles in the daily life of a missionary and how those principles can be lived out in our lives as we strive to make disciples.

Read Acts 17:1-9 and 1 Thessalonians 2:1-16

Write down things you notice about Paul's missional movements. (Where was he? What was his approach? What did he say?)

As a missionary, Paul demonstrates some principles for missional living.

Principle 1 - Find a place to engage lost people for mission

"they came to Thessalonica" (Acts 17:1)

Paul entered a specific place, looking to engage in the mission of Jesus Christ. Thessalonica was a capital city of Macedonia with a lot of commerce and people. Paul went to this city on purpose because he knew that he would find people who were lost and in need of the gospel message. This is a pattern of Paul when making disciples. (Acts 17:10, Acts 18:1)

Find a place you can have a frequent presence. A place you can spend a lot of time and build intentional relationships. In reality, you are already in these places. You live life in them as your regular routines.

Discuss: Do an audit on your schedule and determine 2–3 places you spend the most time. Those are the places you can begin seeing and engaging as a mission field.

If you are not engaged in a place like this where could you begin to spend more intentional time?

What are the 2–3 places you spend the most time where you are around lost people?

Principle 2 - Have consistent habits to open bridges for gospel conversations and relationships

“as was his custom” (Acts 17:2)

In every place that Paul engaged for mission, he had a custom or habit of getting the message of the gospel to the people he connected with. Paul’s mission was not a one-time conversation. He had a pattern of going to the same place with the same people and getting to the gospel with them.

Look for ways to bridge conversations to relationship and spiritual things. Be creative. Consider things you enjoy doing that would connect you to other people. Use those hobbies to intersect your life with other people. Notice clothing apparel, shoes, dogs, kids, tattoos, jewelry, or anything you can notice about them that you can relate to in any way. We call these *bridges to conversation*. Point it out, and quickly introduce yourself to engage in casual conversations. Ask them things about themselves, about their life, really get to know them. Have a few questions to gauge their spiritual views. “Do you attend church anywhere?” “What are your thoughts on God/Jesus?” “Do you have a spiritual

background?" From here, trust the Spirit for sharing the message of Jesus.

Field Trip - Go into a place where there are people and observe people who are around you.

What are things you see that you could use as bridges to conversation?

What are some hobbies you enjoy doing that could be opportunities to meet people and enter relationships and conversations?

What are two questions you could ask to engage spiritual views?

Principle 3 - Invite people into relationship

"we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves," (1 Thess. 2:8)

Paul spent so much time in Thessalonica practicing consistent habits that he formed real relationships with the Thessalonians. They became dear to him and he shared his life with them.

Really take interest in people. Over a period of time from seeing them consistently and talking to them, you form a friendship. Invite them to spend time with you and your family (coffee, dinner, watching TV, or recreation). Hospitality is one of the cornerstone practices of developing relationships for the sake of the gospel. During this time, dive deeper into their story, ask them things about their life and their beliefs. Share your story with them and include your testimony of how Jesus has changed your life. Be sure to stay consistent in talking to this person and praying for them.

Discuss: If you were to develop a relationship with a new person, what would you most likely invite them to do with you? How would you spend time with them?

Principle 4 - Invite people to sit down and discuss the gospel from the Bible

"he reasoned with them from the scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead." (Acts 17:2-3)

Paul opened the Bible and had an in-depth dialogue about the person and work of Jesus Christ. This happened daily.

Ask the people you have developed relationship with if they would be willing to meet and talk more about Jesus and what you believe. Get contact info to set up coffee/meal/in home visit. Create a contact list of the people you have invited and begin to pray for these people daily as you attempt to meet with them as often as they will for more dialogue about the gospel. Share with them the truth of God, Man, Jesus, and Response. Ask them their thoughts and give them opportunities to share what they think.

Principle 5 - Challenge people to repent and receive Jesus by faith. Invite them to follow him in discipleship

"And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas" (Acts 17:4)

Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to turn from their sins and believe in Jesus. He invited them to follow him as he was

following Jesus to change their lives as they surrendered to Christ. (1 Thess. 2:12-14)

You will need to host people and meet with people to have many conversations over a long period of time, all the while praying God would open their hearts. As their interest grows, begin inviting them to believe in Christ, come to the church, come to Community Group, or come to other ministries the church is doing. "Making disciples is inviting people into relationship and challenging them to change."- Dhati Lewis

Discuss: How would you ask someone to receive/trust in Jesus Christ?

How can you stay engaged with someone in continual follow-up and keeping Jesus the focus of conversation?

Personal Application

These principles are only effective as the Holy Spirit moves to give you doors for the gospel and draw people to the message of Jesus. Commit to a consistent missional prayer life. Praying daily for God to help you implement these principles and convert people.

Read Colossians 4:2-4

Spend some time praying for God to help you live on mission