

Discovering My Mission

CLASS 401



401mission



OAK GROVE
BAPTIST CHURCH

Section One: Understanding Our Mission

Our Identity as Missionary People

The Church in the West has by and large become _____ rather than _____. *Attractional methodology is not always bad but definitely becomes problematic when it is your main methodology.*

Think about some of Jesus' words to his followers: "I will make you fishers of men." "You will be my witnesses..." "Go and make disciples of all nations..."
"As the Father sent me, I send you!"

We do not merely have a mission, we are by nature _____.

Implications:

1. We must focus on sending, going, and engaging!
2. We must engage the culture we are in. We should act as missionaries wherever we are placed.

The Scope of Our Mission

"You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 provides a pattern for our mission:

- Jerusalem: _____
- Judea: _____
- Samaria: _____
- The Ends of the Earth!

Notice the Spirit's role in this process:

- Acts 1:8 was God's plan and mission (we are joining Him in what He is doing)
- Outreach is a natural reaction to the Spirit's work in our lives: it is UNNATURAL for Christians NOT to share Jesus!

What are some of the implications of this passage for our mission?

A Few Implications:

- Discern where the Spirit is working and join Him there. Look for ways that God is working in people around you.
- Spend time with God so that His Spirit more fully fills you up and empowers you for mission.
- Get involved in these 4 areas. Where are you weak in these 4 areas? What are some ways that you/we can engage in these 4 areas?

Understanding a little about our world situation:

Go to www.joshuaproject.net

See additional papers from *The Joshua Project*

The Gospel is spreading, especially in the East. Praise God! But there is much work still to do! We desperately need people who are willing to sacrifice risk and even suffer so that Gospel may be heard and received by unreached people.

Global Statistics		
	Peoples-by-Country	Individuals
<u>Global Total</u>	16,309	6.64 billion
<u>Unreached / Least-Reached</u>	6,653	2.72 billion
<u>% Unreached / Least-Reached</u>	40.8 %	41.0 %
<u>10/40 Window Total</u>	7,019	4.05 billion
<u>10/40 Window Least-Reached</u>	5,208	2.37 billion
<u>10/40 Window % Least-Reached</u>	74.2 %	58.5 %

Challenging Mission Facts

- Of the 16,309 people groups by country, [6,653](#) are still considered [unreached](#).
- Of the 16,309 total people groups, 6,653 are identified as Least-Reached using [Joshua Project criteria](#), totaling 2,720,932,000 individuals. Of these 6,653 groups, 5,208 are in 10/40 Window countries. That means 78% of all unreached people groups are in the 10/40 Window.

Images to Understand Our Mission Better

“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.” *Matthew 5:13-16*

Three Images:

Salt: _____

How can we be salt in our world?

Light: _____

How can we be light in our world?

City on a Hill: _____

How can we be a city on a hill in our world?

This should underscore the reality that mission is not something that we do at a certain place and time. **Mission is about our whole lives!!**

Section Two: How to Share Jesus with Others

Evangelism as a Process

“What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.” *1 Cor. 3:5-9*

What does this teach us about evangelism?

- It is a _____.
- Each opportunity is _____.
- In all circumstances God _____.

Prayer as the Starting Point

“Before we talk to men about God, we must talk to God about men!”

What should we pray for?

“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. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.” *Col. 4:2-6*

Pray for...

An Open _____: Opportunities

An Open _____: Courage to take opportunities

An Open _____: Clarity when we share

An Open _____: Receptivity by those who hear

Challenge: Start a prayer journal!

Building Relationships & Carrying Conversations

“For we were delighted to **share** with you not only **the Gospel of God** but **our lives** as well because **you had become so dear to us.**” 1 Thes. 2:8

LIVE OUT THIS VERSE!

The problem: Studies have shown that the longer that we are Christians, the less time we spend with non-Christians.

There is no magic way of sharing Jesus. My experience around those who do it often and well shows me several things:

- They have a vibrant, growing relationship with Jesus. There is no substitute for this!
- They love people and are willing to cultivate relationships with people who are far from God.
- They listen more than they talk.
- They know and can share the Gospel.

Learn to live in 3D (Bill Hybels)

1. Develop _____.

- Start with the obvious. Who are the people closest to you who don't know Jesus? Commit to developing relationships with them.
- Be more strategic with your time and interactions.
- Begin to imagine what it would be like if this person experienced the transforming power of God in his/her life.
- Partner with other believers. There is strength in numbers! Have a cookout or party at your house with some nonbelievers and people from church.
- Be yourself. God uses all types of personalities to reach people.

Key point: We will be completely ineffective if we do not get near people who are far from God.

2. Discover _____.

- Listen a lot more than you talk.
- Intentionally seek to know their story. Listen especially for _____.
- Be attuned to the movement and prompting of the Holy Spirit. Play the role that you feel God calling you to.
- Be radically inclusive of where people are when you find them. Don't condone sins but accept people as they are.

- Begin with simple questions and things that they are interested in. This is the only way that you will ever uncover “heart issues.”

3. Discern _____.

- PRAY!
- Be a resource provider. Focus on anything that they might say that tells you that they might be open to some resource at your disposal. If they take your offer great, if not that’s ok. You can even tell them, “I certainly don’t have all of the answers but if you are open to some suggestions, I may have a resource that could be useful. Maybe a book or cd, or maybe just hearing some of my story or understanding more about God’s story. Just tell me what would be helpful.”
- Ask Questions. Asking questions allows you to test the openness of someone’s heart. We can all get better at this and there is no right or wrong way.

The Direct Method: In this way, you straightforwardly raise a spiritual topic and see if the person is interested in talking about it.

- ❖ Why do you think there are so many religions in the world?
- ❖ Do you think it’s possible to really know if there is a God?
- ❖ What do you think are the most common misconceptions people have about God?
- ❖ Do you think there’s really such a thing as “unconditional love?”
- ❖ How has your belief or disbelief in God affected your life?
- ❖ Do you believe God is actively involved in our world?
- ❖ What do you hope is true about God?
- ❖ Who, in your opinion was Jesus Christ?
- ❖ What’s your spiritual background?
- ❖ Do you ever wonder what happens to us when we die?
- ❖ What do you think a real Christian is?

The Indirect Method: Takes some element of the discussion and utilizes it to turn the conversation towards matters of God, the church, or faith. There is almost no limit to the number of questions that could be asked.

Let's brainstorm some ideas

Business:

Hobbies and spare time:

Nature:

Music:

Sports:

Politics:

Holidays:

Shared struggles:

One of the best resources available for this is a book called ***The Complete Book of Questions by Gary Poole***. I can only give you resources and suggestions. The way you become good at this is by doing it. How you raise topics of faith will depend on your personality, the subject matter you tend to talk about and your own particular style of evangelism. It will feel awkward and it takes courage.

- Be ready to share your story and The Gospel (next section)

Sharing your Story

The common problems with testimonies:

1. _____ - It is too long. Pay attention to the other person's body language, keep it brief and give them opportunity to follow up.
2. _____ - It is incoherent. Prepare & Practice your testimony.
3. _____ - Use words that nonbelievers could understand.
4. _____ - Humility will go a long way with nonbelievers.

A Model (PAUL'S STORY): THREE HANDLES		
HANDLE 1	HANDLE 2	HANDLE 3
<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">BC</p> <p style="margin-top: 40px;">Acts 26: 4 – 11 "I [did] all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus . . ." (v. 9)</p>	<div style="font-size: 3em; margin: 0;">+</div> <p style="margin-top: 40px;">Acts 26:12 – 18 "As I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven . . . and I heard a voice . . ." (vv. 13, 14)</p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; margin: 0;">AD</p> <p style="margin-top: 40px;">Acts 26:19 – 23 "So then . . . I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven . . ." (v. 19)</p>
<p>Concluding Question: "Do you believe the prophets?" (v. 27)</p>		
<p>Unifying Theme: Paul's intense passion for serving God (first without Christ, then as his follower)</p>		

Develop Your Story

(Six Questions)

FIRST HANDLE: BC – BEFORE CHRIST

1. What was your early spiritual background, and how did it affect you as you grew up – your feelings, attitudes, actions, and relationships?

Examples:

- Our family was superstitious. We based our beliefs on things like horoscopes, so I lacked any solid foundation for what to believe.
- My parents taught me that there was no God – so we thought we were on our own to figure out what our lives were all about and to decide right from wrong.
- I was from a religion that taught positive things about Jesus, but denied his claims to be God and the savior of the world.
- We were a religious family, but all I remember were the rituals and rules – so when I got away to school I rejected the whole thing and went my own way.

If you became a Christian as a young child, you may not have any really BC background to talk about. So you might say something like this:

- I grew up in a family where the Bible was taught, and can't remember ever not believing in God. So I grew up with sort of a simple belief in him.

2. What caused you to begin to consider following Christ?

Examples:

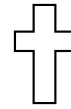
- A friend at school was a Christian, and she challenged me to look into the evidence for Christianity.
- I reached the point where I'd hit bottom. I knew the only hope for me was God – so I cried out to him for help.
- I got to know this guy who was different – in a positive way – and I finally asked him why. He told me about his relationship with Jesus.

If you came to Christ as a child, you might write something like:

- Most of what I saw in my parents, teachers, and friends at church reinforced my confidence that what I was hearing about God was true.

My Story (Questions 1 & 2):

MIDDLE HANDLE: MET CHRIST



3. What realization did you come to that finally motivated you to receive Christ?

Examples:

- After a long time of looking for help in the wrong places, I finally reached out to the God I sensed was there, and asked him to come and rescue me.
- My reading and interaction with Christians convinced me that the teachings of the Bible were true, and I just quit resisting.
- After years of spiritual ups and downs, I realized how foolish it was to keep trying to run my own life.

If you came to Christ as a child, you might say something like:

- I don't know exactly when it happened, but along the way I understood that Jesus died to pay for my sins. Even though I hadn't led a wildly rebellious life, I certainly knew I'd done things that needed forgiving.

4. Specifically, *how* did you receive Christ?

Examples:

- I was at a concert where a guy explained that it wasn't enough to believe Jesus died for my sins – we need to ask him to apply that payment to our lives. So I went and prayed with someone afterward, asking Jesus to forgive my sins and lead my life.
- After years of loneliness I learned that God wants to walk with me throughout my life. So I asked him to remove my sins and to become my very best friend.
- It was hard to admit it, but I concluded that Jesus really is the way, the life, and the truth – and I asked him to forgive my sins and to begin leading me.

If you came to Christ as a child, you might say something like:

- Even though I was quite young, I gradually realized I had done things that needed God's forgiveness. I began trusting in him, and have been experiencing his forgiveness and leadership now for many years.

My Story (Questions 3 & 4):

THIRD HANDLE: AD – AFTER CHRIST

These answers should address the problem or situation mentioned in your answer to the first question.

5. How did your life begin to change after you trusted Christ?

Examples:

- It's hard to describe the difference God made in my life. It wasn't just external; it's like my heart was transformed. Overnight my desires began to change.
- I can hardly put into words the release I felt. I knew my sins had been forgiven, and it was a huge weight off my shoulders. For the first time I felt true joy.
- My life isn't perfect. I still do things I regret. But my overall course has turned from being self-centered, to really caring about God and the people in my life.

If you came to faith as a child, the emphasis in these final questions should be on the difference Christ makes in your life compared to what it might have been like without him. This can be determined, more or less, by reflecting on times when you were not close to him, by considering areas of weakness, or perhaps by observing the lifestyles of old friends and classmates who didn't follow Christ. You might say something like:

- Knowing Christ makes a difference every day of my life. I know myself well enough to realize the mess I'd be in if it weren't for God's guidance. And even with that I sometimes mess up. That's when I'm most thankful for his forgiveness and grace.

6. What other benefits have you experienced since becoming a Christian?

Examples:

- Following God has given me purpose – knowing I'm here for greater reasons than just working, eating, sleeping, and doing it all over again. God wants to use me.
- I used to live with fear and insecurity. While I still worry occasionally, that sense of despair has been replaced with a calm confidence that my life is in God's hands.
- God has replaced what I used to think of as fun in my life with a kind of joy and happiness that really lasts.

My Story (Questions 5 & 6):

Concluding Question

It's best to end your story with a concluding question or statement that requires a response from the other person.

Circle the following statement or question that seems most natural for you, or write your own.

- So, that's what happened to me. Can you relate to any of it?
- How about you – what's your spiritual background?
- Were you taught any of this growing up, or maybe I can ask, what do you believe?
- That's my spiritual story. I'd like to hear yours.
- Does it make any sense to you?

My Concluding Question:

Unifying Theme

This is the central issue in each of our stories that illustrates the difference it's made to know and follow Christ.

My Unifying Theme:

Sharing the Gospel

If we do not get to the point where we share the Gospel with people then we are missing the central purpose of our mission which is to tell others about Jesus so that their lives can be restored.

What is the Gospel?

Read Acts 10:34-43, 1 Cor. 15:1-11, & Ephesians 2:8-10 and write down your thoughts:

Simply Stated: The Gospel is the good news of what God has done in Jesus. Jesus died as our substitute paying the penalty for our sin on the cross and satisfying the wrath of God against our sin. He rose again three days later thus conquering sin and death. He offers new life, forgiveness of sins and a relationship with Him to all who believe in Him.

Important Points about the Gospel:

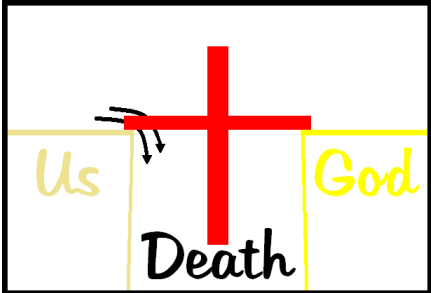
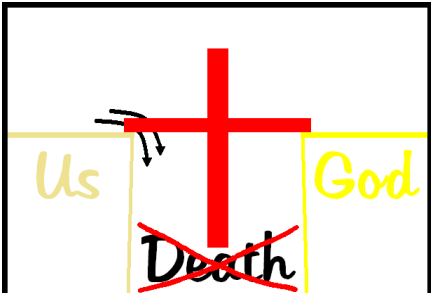
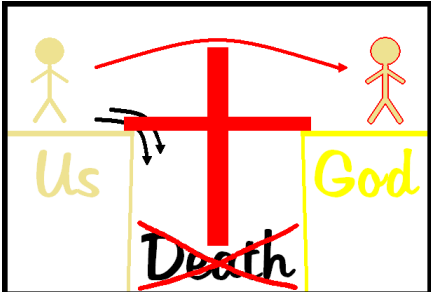
- We are saved by _____.
- We are saved by grace through _____.
- True saving faith is a faith that _____. There is no true faith without _____.

How do we communicate the Gospel?

We must be comfortable communicating the Gospel so it is helpful to learn a few simple ways to do it. There are some examples beginning on the next page.

The Bridge Illustration

KEY CHARACTERS	NARRATIVE	PICTURE
<p>GOD</p> <p>US</p>	<p>God loves us, and he wants to have a relationship with us.</p> <p>[Write “God” on one side and “us” on the other side.]</p> <p>However, we blew it by rebelling against him, and this broke off that relationship.</p> <p>[Draw lines by both words to form walls on each side of a large chasm.]</p> <p>Most of us are aware of this and do things to try to get back to God, but our efforts fail.</p> <p>[Draw arrows going over the “Us” cliff; these represent our failing attempts to get back to God.]</p> <p>Our sins have to be punished, and the penalty is spiritual death – which means separation from God for eternity in a place called hell. That’s the predicament we’re all in – and there’s nothing we can do in our own strength to change it.</p> <p>[Write the word “Death” at the bottom of the chasm.]</p>	

<p>CHRIST</p>	<p>But there's good news: God did for us what we couldn't do for ourselves, by building a bridge back to himself.</p> <p>[Draw a cross so it touches both sides of the chasm.]</p> <p>How? Christ paid for it by dying for us on the cross as our substitute. He paid the spiritual death penalty that we owed, and he rose from the dead to give us his life.</p> <p>[Cross out the word "Death" at the bottom of the chasm.]</p>	 
<p>YOU</p>	<p>It's not enough to just know this. We must receive him by admitting that we have sinned against him and by asking for his forgiveness and leadership.</p> <p>[Draw a person on the left side of the chasm; then an arrow to the right side of the chasm; then a person on the right side of the chasm.]</p> <p>Conclude by asking your friend where they think they are on the diagram.</p>	

The Judge

This illustration portrays God’s justice in dealing with our sin, as well as his great love for us. Many people in our culture relate best to stories, and this one presents the truths they most need to hear concerning Jesus and his work as our substitute.

Outline	
<p>A woman broke the law, was caught, and the judge gave her a penalty she couldn’t pay.</p>	<p>A young woman was arrested for breaking the law. She knew she’d been caught red-handed and couldn’t deny her guilt, and later stood in front of a judge’s bench and admitted what she had done. The man wearing the robe was a kind man, but he was also a just judge, and knew he couldn’t let her off the hook. She had broken the law. So he gave her the penalty prescribed by the law, which meant the girl was required to pay a steep fine – one that she couldn’t afford – or else end up in jail.</p>
<p>That judge then came to her side and paid the fine.</p>	<p>But then the man did an amazing thing. He stood up, took off his judge’s robe, walked around to the front of the bench where the girl was standing, pulled out his wallet, and lovingly looked in her eyes as he handed her the money she needed to pay her entire fine.</p>
<p>Why? She was his daughter!</p>	<p>Why did he do this? Because the woman was his own daughter! Being a good judge, he had to honor the law and impose the penalty. But being a loving father, he was willing to come to her side to pay the price on her behalf.</p>
<p>She now had a choice: humbly receive the gift or not?</p>	<p>But not the girl had a choice to make. Would she let go of her pride, and humbly reach out to receive her father’s generous offer? Or would she insist on trying to prove she didn’t need help from him or anyone else, and end up going to jail?</p>
<p>God is like the judge. He requires a steep penalty for sin – and paid it in Christ.</p>	<p>This story illustrates the situation between God and us. God is a holy and just judge who said, “You’ve broken my laws and sinned against me, and the penalty is death.” But he is also like a loving father, who said, “I love you and will come down and pay the penalty myself,” and then he took off his heavenly robe, came to earth in the person of Christ, and paid for our sins by dying on the cross.</p>
<p>Now we have a choice: will we humbly receive his gift or not?</p>	<p>Now we, too, have a choice to make: to humbly receive his payment, forgiveness, and leadership – or to reject his sacrifice and spend the rest of our lives, and eternities trying to pay a debt we can never fully pay.</p>

Do vs. Done

This final illustration is helpful for people who think they need to do good works to try to earn their way into God's forgiveness and favor.

Outline	
<p>Religion: -is spelled D-O -trying to do enough to please God</p> <p>The Problem: -never know if we've done enough -the Bible says we never can do enough</p> <p>Christianity: -is spelled D-O-N-E -Jesus did what we couldn't do. He lived a perfect life, and died to pay for our sins.</p> <p>Our Response: -Must receive what he has done – by asking for his forgiveness and leadership</p>	<p>A lot of people don't realize that there's a big difference between religion and Christianity – it's in how they're spelled! Religion is spelled "D-O" [it's helpful to actually write down the word, "DO"]. It consists of trying to do enough good things to earn our way back to God.</p> <p>The problem is we never know when we have done enough. More than that, the Bible makes it clear that we never can do enough. (Romans 3:23 says: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.")</p> <p>Christianity, on the other hand, is spelled "D-O-N-E" [if you're writing, add the letters "NE" to the end of "DO" – spelling DONE]. That's because Jesus has done for us what we could never do for ourselves. He lived the perfect life that we could never live. Then he died on the cross to pay for all of the sins we could never pay for, and he rose from the dead to offer us new life.</p> <p>But it is not enough to just know this. We have to receive him and what he has DONE for us. We do that by asking him for his forgiveness and leadership in our lives.</p>
<p>Does this make sense to you? Have you ever received what Jesus has done for you?</p>	

What are some Key verses?

It is important to know some Scripture passages. These are some key ones:

- Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:8, & Romans 10:9-10
- John 3:16, 14:6
- 2 Corinthians 5:21

Important points about communicating the Gospel:

1. Never underestimate the commitment involved in following Jesus. We have a tendency to diminish the cost and elevate the benefits of trusting Jesus. But Jesus did not do this. ***We do no good if we comfort lost people with the thought that they are going to heaven because they prayed a simple prayer.***
2. Open up a Bible and let them read the verses.
3. Remember that the Gospel is not just about going to heaven instead of hell. The Gospel is the declaration that Jesus has conquered sin and death through the cross and the resurrection. It is the hope that we can enjoy life as it was meant to be lived, in relationship with God, both here and forever in heaven.
4. Remember that God does the convicting. We are called to be faithful in sharing. He will do the rest so take comfort and find courage!
5. Remember that there is no right way to sharing Jesus.

Closing Challenges:

- Will you sacrifice and risk for the sake of God's mission?
- Will you rejoice for the opportunity to share Jesus even (or especially) if that means suffering, pain, and rejection?
- Will you be an Acts 1:8 witness?

Look at Covenant

Prayer of commissioning

MY MISSION COVENANT

I commit to...

- * Develop relationships with nonbelievers, discover their stories, and discern my next steps through the wisdom that the Spirit provides.
- * Pray for lost people and depend on God knowing that He is responsible for the results.
- * Share my story and God's story when the opportunities arise.
- * Be an Acts 1:8 witness who supports and joins God's mission in the 4 spheres explained in this class.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Pastor

An Overview of C.L.A.S.S

100 Level Seminars:

To lead people to Christ and membership at Oak Grove

200 Level Seminars:

To grow people to spiritual maturity

300 Level Seminars:

To equip people with the skills they need for ministry

400 Level Seminars:

To enlist people to the worldwide mission of sharing Christ