



Called Together: A Guide to Forming Missional Communities

Handouts

Adapted from Jonathan Dodson, Called Together: A Guide to Forming Missional Communities (Appendix I) No content has been revised in this adaptation. Content has been reformatted according to Sacred City Church's document format and branding.



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Week 1: The Gospel is Doctrinal

The gospel is the good news that Jesus has defeated sin, death, and evil through his own death and resurrection and is making all things new, even us. This definition of the gospel can be broken down into three aspects.

1. The gospel is doctrinal: it changes what we believe.
2. The gospel is personal: it changes who we are.
3. The gospel is missional: it changes where and how we live.

The Gospel is Doctrinal: It Changes What We Believe

“Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.” —1 Corinthians 15:1-5

Personal Reflection

The Bible is the best place to begin to understand the message of the gospel. Read the following passages and write down 2-3 key points that summarize that passage. Don't be surprised if the same key points continue to emerge!

- John 3:16-17
- Romans 3:23
- Ephesians 2:8-10
- Romans 1:16
- Galatians 1:8
- 1 Peter 1:12

Now in one to three sentences, using your own words, answer the question: What is the gospel?



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Week 2: The Gospel is Personal

The gospel is the good news that Jesus has defeated sin, death, and evil through his own death and resurrection and is making all things new, even us.

Beholding Jesus

The gospel changes us into the image and likeness of Jesus. The gospel frees us to admit our failures, because our worth doesn't hang on our success. Rather, our worth hangs on Jesus' success, his life over death.

Key Text: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit." —2 Corinthians 3:18

Becoming Like Jesus

The gospel changes who we are by changing what we look at! The gospel offers hope because it gives us the eyes to behold Jesus as well as the power to become like him. The power for gospel change is the person of the Holy Spirit.

Personal Reflection

Using the Scripture above, think through and wrestle with these questions in your own life.

- Do you want to change? Why? What causes you to change?
- Where do you look for success? How do you hide your failures?
- What is the gospel in the face of your success, failure, and power to change?



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Week 3: The Gospel is Missional

The gospel is the good news that Jesus has defeated sin, death, and evil through his own death and resurrection and is making all things new, even us.

The Gospel Changes Where You Live

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” —Luke 4:18-19, Isaiah 61

The gospel changes everything. It is not only good news for us, but also for our neighbors, the poor, our city, and the world. It affects the social, cultural, and physical fabric of the universe.

The Church Joins the Mission

Because the gospel changes what we believe and who we are, it should change where we live. We should make great culture, redeem social ill, and share a whole gospel. Christians should be among the most creative, neighborly, compassionate people in the city. If the gospel truly affects everything, then it should affect everything in our lives. It should change where we live.

Personal Reflection

Read and reflect on these passages and take notes on what God is changing and who Christians are in this recreation.

- Matthew 28:18-20
- 2 Corinthians 5:17-20
- Isaiah 61:4
- Revelation 21

We’ve now unpacked the three aspects of the gospel: doctrinal, personal, and missional. Which way of looking at the gospel are you most familiar with? Of the three aspects, which one do you think you could grow in the most?



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Week 4: Responding to the Gospel

The gospel empowers neither religion nor rebellion, but repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

The Gospel is Not Religious Performance or Spiritual License!

The religious are bound to keeping rules, and the rebellious are bound to breaking rules. The gospel, however, tells us that we are bound, not to rules, but to Christ.

Repentance & Faith

“Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’” —Mark 1:14-15

When Jesus said “repent” he was saying to turn away not only from sin, but to turn from the lies that sin deceives us with, and to turn towards something truer and better, to turn to Jesus. We are encouraged to “believe” in Jesus, to cling to his promises, to put our hope, trust, and faith in him.

Personal Reflection

- Where do you look for hope, satisfaction, peace, approval, power, and comfort apart from Jesus?
- How good are those things in giving you what they promised?
- What does Jesus promise in the gospel?
- What would it look like to not only stop sinning, but start believing in the gospel of Jesus?



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Week 5: What is Community?

“I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought to be- have in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.” —1 Timothy 3:15

What Community Isn't

- A book club
- A social club
- A counseling group
- A social service group
- A neighborhood association
- An affinity group
- A dinner party
- An event or meeting

What Community Is

“And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling all their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” —Acts 2:42-47

Personal Reflection

Using the passage above, make two lists. In one list, write about the nature, quality, and essence of this community. In the other, write what the community does and their actions.

- What would it look like for you to become this kind of community?
- What must change in your hearts? How must you view your life?



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Week 6: The Defeaters of Community

Church isn't something you attend; it's something that you are! You are the church as you work, go to school, participate in sports, enjoy hobbies, and do ordinary things. So, do ordinary things but with gospel intentionality. In other words, do the everyday things of life, but do them in a way that shows your devotion to Jesus, one another, and your neighbors and city!

Ordinary Life: Making Your Life a Communal Life

Think through your average week, what are some of your commitments and weekly rhythms?

Community Doesn't Look Like the Ideal But Is Messy

1. Conflict in relationships does not take God by surprise. He appoints it as a grace for our Christlike change (James 1, Roman 8, Colossians 3).
2. Imperfect community creates the opportunity to give and receive the gospel of grace by forgiving and forbearing with one another (Ephesians 4:32).
3. The mess of community helps us become a maturing community that speaks the truth in love to one another (Ephesians 4:15).

Personal Reflection

- Do you ever find yourself “too busy” to be the church?
- What happens when parents are too busy to be family to their kids?
- Why are you so busy?
- What is so important that it draws you away from your family?
- What unspoken ideals and expectations do you have for community?
- What if your community was filled with conflict and mess?
- How would that teach you the gospel?



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Week 7: The Mission of a “Missional Community”

“And Jesus came and said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” — Matthew 28:18-20

When we say our mission is to “make disciples” most people think of two things: winning people over to Jesus (evangelism) or helping a follower of Jesus learn to obey him (discipleship). But when we look at Mathew 28, we don’t see an either/or discipleship; in fact we see both “evangelism” and “discipleship.”

The Great Commission is neither evangelism- nor discipleship-centered. It is gospel-centered. The command to make disciples is described three ways: 1) being sent in the power of Jesus, 2) baptizing into the name of Jesus, and 3) teaching the commands of Jesus. The mission of the church is radically Jesus-centered!

Personal Reflection

- How does this description of discipleship change or challenge your perspective on mission?
- How are you making disciples? How are you growing as a disciple of Jesus?
- How would living in a community enhance your participation in the mission?



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Week 8: Being On Mission Together

A Sending God

God is missional. The *missio dei* is a Latin phrase that classically refers to God's "mission" or "sending" – the Father sending the Son, and the Father and Son sending the Spirit. As a missional God, the Father, Son, and Spirit, create and send a missional people and churches.

- The Father sent the Son
- The Father and the Son sent the Spirit
- The Father, Son, and Spirit send the Church

A Missional Community

A missional community, then, is a group of people who are devoted to Jesus, to one another, and to their neighbors and city! They are disciples of Jesus who are committed to making more disciples of Jesus!

Sent Like Jesus

"Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.'" — John 20:21

If the way the Father sent Jesus is the way that Jesus sends us, then it is important to ask: "How did the Father send Jesus?"

Mission Is For Everybody

"And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." — Ephesians 4:11-12

Mission happens in the everyday things of life: backyard grill-outs with the neighbors, lunch breaks with your co-workers, attending concerts, watching films, play dates, and happy hours. The missional church is not about adding activities to an already busy life; rather, it is a matter of being yourself in the everyday with gospel intentionality.

Week 8: Being On Mission Together, continued on the next page

Personal Reflection

If being “sent” is part of our identity, then it would be a good idea to know who we are sent to. A great starting place is your group of friends, the people who live in your neighborhood, apartment complex, or dorm room; your co-workers, people you share a passion or hobby with, or the other regulars at your favorite hangout.

If we are going to know how the gospel is “good news” for the people we are sent to, we also need to know them! Here are five questions to help you get specific about discipling others with the gospel:

1. **People:** What people is God sending you to? Where do they live and hang out? How could we reorient our lives to be with them?
2. **Language:** What “language” do they speak? Are these people young families, business professionals, hipsters, etc.?
3. **Value:** What is most important to them? Success, money, relationships, independence, etc.?
4. **Gospel:** How is the gospel good news to them? How does it address their values? How is the gospel better than what they value most right now?
5. **Needs:** What are their needs? How does Jesus meet those needs? How can we be a part of meeting their needs in a way that “shows” the gospel?