

THE MISSION OF GOD *Small Group Discussion*

THREE

ECCLESIOLOGY - GOD'S CHURCH JOINS GOD'S MISSION

DISCUSSION OVERVIEW

This discussion will focus on Ecclesiology, namely the role that the church plays in God's mission. Jesus calls his people to himself to gather together as the church, and worship God, nurture believers, and witness to the world of his good news.

SERIES OVERVIEW

What is the mission of God? In other words, what is God trying to accomplish? To better understand that, we will look at how God wants to move the gospel forward in the world. This small group study will examine the roles that Jesus, the church, and we ourselves have to play in fulfilling God's mission in the gospel.

POSSIBLE FURTHER DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What other scripture comes to mind when you think of God's mission?
- How does our culture respond to the gospel?
- What makes this challenging?
- Where does Christ come into play / redeem this?
- What is the role of the Holy Spirit in this?
- What makes having a mission so important?
- How does this affect our small group?
- How has God called us to be a faithful presence in other's lives?

LOOK *What do we see around us and in our lives?*

What is your best experience as a member of a team?

What made it such a good/valuable experience?

BOOK *What does Scripture say about this?*

EPHESIANS 1:15-23

¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

EPHESIANS 3:10-11

¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 PETER 2:9-10

⁹ But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Q1 What stands out about the way Paul prays?

What stands out about the things he prays for?

Potential answers: Knowledge, power. He asks God to reveal himself and his power to the people in greater ways.

Q2 What role does Jesus play in forming and building up the church in these passages?

Potential answers: Jesus is the head of the church, and we are called to his body.

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God's mission is accomplished as his gospel moves forward through Jesus and the witness of his people, the church.

Missio Dei (God's Mission)

God desires that people would know him and be saved.

Christology (Jesus)

Jesus comes to make God known and to die for sins that we might be saved.

Ecclesiology (The Church)

Jesus calls his people to himself to gather together as the church, and worship God, nurture believers, and witness to the world of his good news.

Missiology (People on Mission)

Jesus calls the church to advance God's mission through the gospel in the Holy Spirit's power as more and more people become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

Q3 How do we see the church's identity and role in God's mission from these passages? In what ways does this set the church apart from a social club or other type of group?

Potential answers: We are chosen, called to Christ's body, under his rule. God wants to make his wisdom known through the church. We are proclaiming God's excellencies.

Q4 How have you thought about your identity as a member of the body of Christ and your role in serving God's mission? What about these passages challenges you? What encourages you?

Potential answers: I've been less involved than I could be. I've never thought about the calling to proclaim God's excellencies. I am comforted to remember that Jesus is the head of the church, and I am only one member.

THE GOSPEL *The Good News of Jesus*

What do we see about the work of God in these passages?

Potential answers: God is in control, and revealing himself through the church. It is encouraging to know that God has chosen us and called us to know him and serve him.

What are some of the excellent things that God has done in your life?

*Potential answers: He has turned me from things (relationships, job status, control) that I used to look to for life and comfort and brought me much deeper satisfaction in him. **Leaders note: This is a great opportunity to point people back to Jesus and his work in our lives.***

Accountability/Reflection

Share together and pray for each other

TOOK *What will you take away from today's discussion?*

Possible questions to consider:

What are some ways that we, as a small group, can encourage one another to proclaim the excellencies of God who 'called us out of darkness and into marvelous light?'

Who is someone that should hear about the excellencies of God's work in your life?