

ACTS 29 - THE MISSION GOES ON

Message from Sunday, 2 May 2021
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The question before you this morning is: If the mission did not end with Jesus, and it did not end with the apostles and the early church, and it did not end with all the believers that lived before us... If this mission must still go on...

The question to you is ...Where do you see yourself fit into this mission?

I trust that by the time we wrap up this message you would have answered this question.

As you know Luke wrote two Bible Books: The Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts.

Suppose Luke wrote a third book... starting as chapter 29 of the Book of Acts. Let me take some liberty... would it sound like this?

Acts 29:1 In my first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen to be his witness in Jerusalem and all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. In my second book, I described how the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles and the early church to do what Jesus commanded them to do. Now in this third book I feel compelled to tell you that the mission Jesus began and handed over to His apostles is now continuing to spread through the lives of everyday followers of Christ everywhere – the mission is still going on! Every believer is living lives in line with what Jesus commanded us to live – they are truly busy making disciples of all the nations and God's Kingdom is advancing at a radical pace!

THE MISSION MUST GO ON

But how and where did it all start ...?

- God creates earth and His goal is to bring heaven to earth.
- He creates Adam and Eve with the idea that they should reflect His goodness and glory.
- He blesses them to be fruitful and gives them a mission to multiply, fill the earth and rule over it and bring heaven to earth.
- God gives man a free will to choose and to obey with a consequence of life and death attached to it.
- Eve and then Adam gets deceived and robbed of their authority by the devil and gets separated from God and dies spiritually.
- The mission is interrupted and disrupted.
- Disorder and corruption set in.
- The Father sends His Son to earth on a rescue mission – to destroy the devil - to save what is lost and restore the original mission – that is to bring heaven's kingdom to earth.

And so, the **rescue mission begins...**

- A virgin falls pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus, the Son of God is born and becomes human.
- He grows and matures – He learns obedience through suffering - He is baptised by John the Baptist - the Father affirms His Sonship and His authority – the Holy Spirit fills Him - He is tempted by the devil, but never sins – And so, ...

His Ministry begins...

- He announces the Kingdom of God.
- He teaches about this Kingdom.
- He reveals the Father.
- He calls on all people to repent so that they may enter His Kingdom.
- He performs miracles.
- He heals the sick.
- He casts out demons.
- He proves His divinity.
- He dies on a cross and sheds His blood for mankind.
- He is buried.
- He is raised from the dead by the power of God.
- He makes a way for man to be reconciled to God.
- For 40 Days He shows that He has risen from the dead and is alive.
- He ascends to heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father.
- He promises to return: to judge all of creation and establish a New Heaven and a New Earth.

But before His mission was completed, He made disciples and handed the mission **over to them...**

- "Follow Me".
- "I will make you fishers of men".
- They walked with Jesus, He taught them about the Kingdom of God, He dealt with their personal issues, He Demonstrated the Kingdom, They Experienced life with Jesus, He fed the thousands, He calmed the storms, He walked on water, He cast out demons, He raised the dead, and He prepared them to go and do the same...
- He commissioned them – "go and make disciples of all the nations...."
- Wait in Jerusalem after My departure... you shall receive power... then go...

ALL OF THIS IS RECORDED IN THE BIBLE. IT IS NOT MEANT TO BE A MERE HISTORY BOOK BUT A LIVING UNFOLDING STORY OF GOD'S PLAN AND PURPOSE FOR MANKIND.

1. YOU FIT INTO THIS STORY!

As we studied through the Book of Acts, I noticed the names of people...

Some were well known and prominent – like the main characters in the story...

Peter, John, James, Stephen, Phillip, Ananias, Paul, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Apollos, John-Mark, Lydia, Cornelius, and others...

But there were many other names of believers mentioned...

Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas, Aeneas, Dorcas, Simon the Tanner, Agabus, Rhoda, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Jason, Dionysius, Damaris, Aquila, Priscilla, Justus, Crispis, Sosthenes, Erastus, Gaius, Aristarchus, Sopater, Secundus, Tychicus, Trophimus, Eutychus, Mnason, Julius and Publius.

Do not feel insignificant – this proves that God uses ordinary people like you and me to do extraordinary things to advance God's Kingdom.

"YOU ARE PART OF GOD'S STORY AND YOU ARE PART OF HIS MISSION!"

- You are also called by Jesus: "Follow Me".
- Jesus also wants to make you a "Fisher of Men".
- You are also sent on mission to go and make disciples (Christ Followers) of all nations.
- You got baptised in water to prove that you died to self and you now live through and for Christ.
- You got filled with the Holy Spirit so that you will have the power to share Christ and to prove His existence by praying for people and do supernatural things in the name of Jesus!
- Do not underestimate the power of love, kind words and deeds of service and generosity.
- Jesus promised that the prayers you pray in His name will be heard by your Father in heaven – you can bring change to your home and places of work by praying to God.
- God gave you lots of things to share with those in need – they will see Jesus in you when you do it.

Do not disregard the day-to-day things we do. By partnering with God's Spirit we can do great things for God. Some Examples:

- The time a Grandparent spends with their Grandchildren.
- The way you treat and relate with your home and garden staff, that is, if you are privileged to be in that position.
- Think about what you are gifted to do and are good at. Partner with God. Turn every appointment into a strategic opportunity to share God's Good News with everyone you relate with.

2. CONNECT THE GOSPEL WITH EVERY ASPECT OF LIFE EVERYWHERE.

Each one of us has six areas of connecting that shape our community.

- a. Secret Place – Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Priesthood of the believer.
- b. Home – Our Family.
- c. Church Family - Community Groups.
- d. Church Family – Celebrations.
- e. Colleagues – Workplace.
- f. Where we have our Social Connections.

3. DO NOT GO IT ALONE!

Just like Jesus formed a community with the 12 and sent them out in pairs, you also need to be part of a community – a place to know and be known – a place to belong – a place to be cared for – a place to give and a place to receive!!

CONCLUSION

I started this message by asking the question: Where do you see yourself fit into **God's** mission?

I am sure that the question is now answered.

Today's message was to show you that the mission goes on!

A final question: Will you be part of it?