

Implications of Being Missional

- The missional church is expansive.
 - On the day of Pentecost, there were 120 disciples gathered together. Later that day it was over 3,000. It continues to expand to the Samaritans, and then the Gentiles. There are about 16,000 new believers in Jesus every day.
- The missional church is contextually sensitive.
 - Compare Acts 2:14-41; 14:8-18; and 17:16-34.
 - It is aware the gospel and church needs to be contextualized in the culture in which it goes. Acts 2 has a Jewish flavor. In Acts 14, in Lystra, the message that was given was very basic (A Creator and Providential God). In Acts 17, Paul gives the sophisticated argument, and does not reference the OT, other than referring to Adam. He quotes pagans talking about Zeus and transposes it to talking about God.
 - Contextualization is hard, and some of us see it as scary, but it's necessary. Two extremes: 1) under-contextualization, which leads to ethno-centric extractions where US missionaries form a compound and make it seem like a church from the US; 2) over-contextualization, where you have syncretism.
 - Contextualize the right way. Find the biblical balance.

Implications of Being Missional

- Catholic or universal (Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Rev. 5:9).
 - The church is universal. We are to make disciples of all nations. All people groups. Jesus will not allow us to be engaged in a parochial, limited, and circumscribed mission. Dr. Allison believes our generation will plant the church to every corner of the globe, as long as we plant missional churches.
- Each church needs to have this as their primary goal.



Missional = Church

- Being missional is not a functional aspect of the church (i.e., missions committee). That doesn't work.
- We need to see the church as being mission. Everything we do is part of the mission. Baptism, Lord's Supper, preaching, youth group. Etc. is all missional.
 - Whatever we do, every person needs to conceptually understand that everything they are doing is part of the mission.
- How can a church bring this about?
 - At the birth of any given church, it needs to embrace being missional as an identity marker.
 - From day 1, give and budget aggressively for church planting, evangelism, and missional endeavors. This needs to be in the church's DNA. (Dr. Allison's example of 2008 church plant).
 - What about a pre-existing church where this is not in the DNA? Preach, teach, mentor, and show the people it must be part of the DNA. It must be in what we do in everything. Should be the first things the elders talk about in their elders meetings.



Missional Mindset

- The church's identity and its practice need to be in unity.
 - Jurgen Moltmann: we must understand "not that the church 'has' a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church. Mission does not come from the church; it is from mission and in light of mission that the church has to be understood."
 - George Hunsberger: "a missional ecclesiology—an ecclesiology that sees the fundamental missionary character of the church as critical for its self-understanding in a post-Christian, postmodern setting."
- This is far different than missions being seen more as an activity of the church rather than in terms of the church's essential image of itself: *missional* is a matter of identity first, then function.
 - "The fundamental point is that missions is not peripheral or additional for the church. The fact that is has been sent is of its essential nature, so much so that the sending is implicitly and explicitly formative in all aspects of its life—its worship, its *koinonia*, its engagements, its witness, its birthing of new communities, its sociopolitical engagements, its compassion and mercy."
- Moreover, missional is a matter of corporate identity first, then individual engagement.

Missional Mindset

- Sadly evangelicals tend to see Christian identity as fundamentally individual, which undermines the communal.
- If evangelical faith and identity is first individual, then missions is seen in the same way. It is the “individual’s” responsibility to give witness of Christ. Missions is not the mission of the church, but of the Christian.
 - Missions is then relegated to the responsibility of the Christians in the church (rather than the church itself), which then has the church as an entity not prioritize it since it assumes it is an individual responsibility rather than a corporate one.
 - This gets it entirely wrong!
- Instead, mission is an identity marker of the church corporately, which means it is the priority of the church as a whole that then calls on individuals to do their part. It does not assume or rely on the individual, but instead trains and rallies the individual to function in accordance with one’s true identity.



Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*

- “The Bible renders to us the story of God’s mission through God’s people in their engagement with God’s world for the sake of the whole of God’s creation. The Bible is the drama of this God of purpose engaged in the mission of achieving that purpose universally....Mission is, in that much-abused phrase, ‘what it’s all about.’” (22)
- Luke 24:44-49 (cf. Acts 26:22-23) is key: Jesus “seems to be saying that the whole of the Scripture (which we now know as the Old Testament) finds its focus and fulfillment *both* in the life and death and resurrection of Israel’s Messiah, *and* in the mission to all nations, which flows out of that event.” (30)
- “Mission is not ours; mission is God’s. Certainly, the mission of God is the prior reality out of which flows any mission that we get involved in. Or...it is not so much the case that God has a mission in the world. Mission was not made for the church; the church was made for mission—God’s mission.” (62)



Christopher Wright's *The Mission of God*

- “God’s will to be known is the mainspring of our mission to make him known....So all our missional efforts to make God known must be set within the prior framework of God’s own will to be known. We are seeking to accomplish what God himself wills to happen. This is both humbling and reassuring. It is humbling inasmuch as it reminds us that all our efforts would be in vain but for God’s determination to be known. We are neither the initiators of the mission of making God known to the nations nor does it lie in our power to decide how the task will be fully accomplished or when it may be deemed to be complete. But it is also reassuring. For we know that behind all our fumbling efforts and inadequate communication stands the supreme will of the living God, reaching out in loving self-revelation, incredibly willing to open blind eyes and reveal his glory through the treasures of the gospel delivered in the clay pots of his witnesses.” (129-130)]

