

LEAD SHEET

OUTWARD - WEEK 1

OPEN HEART

MAY 29, 2016

THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:

WORSHIP WITH YOUR LIFE

If you want to know God better, give back to Him!

GETTING STARTED

Perhaps you have heard the question asked, "How do you spend your God time?" The intention of this question is harmless, although it can lead one to an incorrect understanding of his or her mission. The God we serve cannot be penciled in. He is the creator of the Universe. He will not fit in your day planner.

God wants your whole life. All of your heart and time should be devoted to Him. As you connect to Him, He will immediately lead you into His mission. So, how is it possible to live out God's mission if your schedule is full of stuff already? Are you just supposed to quit your job and become a monk? On the other hand, should you just give up and be content with putting God into a few weekly time slots.

In the next couple of lessons, we're going to talk about how each of us can move outward by following Jesus with everyday, ordinary, and practical actions. Today, we're going to look at our Gospel motivation.

General Discussion:

- How is God involved with each time slot of your day?
- What will it take to let Jesus be the focus in every area of your life?
- How will it be possible to focus on others in each area?

DIGGING IN

As you move outward into mission, your first confrontation will be your motivation. Your motivation must be Jesus! You will not be able to love others purely without following Him completely. Today we are mostly going to talk about following Jesus into mission.

Read Mark 1:16-18

THE CALL

One of the first things you'll notice is that Jesus calls Peter and Andrew immediately into mission. This is the same calling for us today. Therefore, if you are a follower of Jesus you are a missionary.

Discussion Questions:

1. What kind of thoughts do you think were crossing Peter and Andrew's minds when Jesus called them?
2. Why do you think Jesus would call fishermen?
3. What did Jesus call them to do?
(To come and follow Him.)
4. What do you think most attracted them to Jesus? Was it His message, His personality, or the people He healed?

THE FOCUS

It is interesting to note that Jesus does not call them to be powerful or rich. Rather, He says they are to go out and focus on others. This is our call too, to move outward with a focus on others.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the hardest thing about focusing on others?
2. Are there any areas in which you are unwilling to allow Jesus or others?
3. Who in your life models an "outward lifestyle"?

THE MISSION

Another point that you will notice is that Peter and Andrew left everything to follow Jesus. For these two disciples fishing was not only their livelihood, it was all they knew. It was their family business. By dropping their nets and following Jesus, they were departing their loved ones, leaving everything that was comfortable, and heading off on a new mission into the unknown.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think it was important for the disciples to drop their nets?

Verse 18 tells us that the disciples immediately dropped their nets and followed Jesus. Can you imagine this scene if Peter and Andrew had tried to keep their nets? A few miles of lugging cumbersome nets, collecting dirt and miscellaneous items, would have caused quite a scene. They would quickly become weary from carrying their heavy load.

2. Are you carrying nets with you as you follow Jesus?

3. Are you willing to drop everything to follow Jesus into His mission?

Sometimes we can sense Jesus calling us to Him and His mission, but we are unwilling to leave everything behind to follow. Instead, we carry our baggage into our relationship with Him. This baggage (our net) could be a relationship with another person, an issue of pride, or even the desire to have control.

Here's some good news. You do not have to know where Jesus is calling you; you just have to be willing to follow.

MAKING IT REAL

As we choose to follow Jesus, He changes our hearts. Our lives become open vessels to Him. Because of Jesus, we open our homes, our refrigerators, and our schedules.

General Discussion:

- What are some hindrances of having an open heart to God's mission? (*Selfishness, fear, worry, and sin can all keep us from God's mission.*)

Think about your weekly schedule. Answer each of the following questions based on that.

- Where do you spend your time?
- How does this expose where your heart is?
- Some of you might say I spend most of my time at my job that I hate, so that can't be where my heart is. So, let's come at it a different way: If you get a day off what do you do with it?
- Where you do spend your money? If you get a bonus at your job, or a gift card, where does it go?

Another reason we may not follow Jesus into His mission is that our hearts are hardened towards others. Racism and segregation are major factors in keeping us from an outward lifestyle. One Biblical example that comes to mind is the story of Jonah. He is a prophet of God and one day the Word of the Lord came to him.

Read Jonah 1:1-3

Discussion Questions:

1. What was God asking of Jonah? (*God was asking that he go and preach to the people of Nineveh.*)
2. What did Jonah do instead? (*He refused to go and instead ran the opposite direction.*)
3. Why did Jonah run in the first place? (*He ran because he hated the people of Nineveh.*)

So, you may call Jonah a self-righteous racist. Most of you know how a big fish swallowed Jonah, and after spending three days in its belly, the fish finally spat him up onto dry land. Then, Jonah reluctantly made his way to Nineveh. He

preached to the people, warning them of God's wrath. And they repented. You would think this would please Jonah. Instead, he became angry because he couldn't stand the thought of God's mercy and love flowing to a people that he deemed unworthy. In chapter 4, Jonah once again shows us a side of himself that is hardened and hateful.

4. Do you find yourself angry when others experience God? Are there any types of people in this world to whom you would refuse to open your heart and share your faith?

CLOSING PRAYER

As we leave today, let's realize that Jesus is calling us into mission. He has prepared places and conversations for us this week. Are you open to His calling? Is there any place that you wouldn't go if Jesus asked?

#CRAZYFORCHRIST