

The Church in Action: Missions

This week we are reminded by the words of Jesus to live life on mission, and this mission is to reach people with the gospel around the world, "... but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). If we are truly going to reach the world with the gospel, we need to be intentional in at least four things.

1. Be Intentional with our location.

Consider how Peter and John were intentional in going to the place of prayer. "Now Peter and John were going up to the temple at the ninth *hour*, the hour of prayer" (Acts 3:1). Peter and John were no longer bound by the traditions of their fathers. They did not have to go to the place of prayer at the ninth hour. However, they knew there would be people there who needed Christ. They were intentional with their time. They went to a location they knew would be filled with lost people with the purpose of sharing the gospel of Jesus with them. We, too, must be wise with our time. We must intentionally invest it in the lives of others for the sake of the gospel and the advancement of the Kingdom of God.

2. Be Intentional with our conversation.

As we interact with lost people, we must be intentional with our conversation. Consider the following example when Peter and John ran into a lame beggar outside of the temple who was seeking money. Luke writes, "When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he *began* asking to receive alms. But Peter, along with John, fixed his gaze on him and said, "Look at us!" And he *began* to give them his attention, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, "I do not possess silver and gold, but what I do have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene—walk" (Acts 3:3-6)! Notice how Jesus responded to the lame beggar. First, he actually noticed the beggar. Most people just passed by the beggar. Today, more and more people feel looked over. People are often staring at their phones or just too busy to notice others. Not so, with Peter and John. They noticed the lame beggar. Then they listened to him. This is something we would do well to imitate. People are looking to be heard. When we listen to people it gives us a right to be heard. After Peter and John listened to the lame beggar, Peter spoke up and offered him the opportunity to trust Christ. Oh Lord, please help us to be so bold! Jesus is the only One who can truly change a life, and all people need the Lord!

3. Be Intentional with our celebration.

Be sure to celebrate what Jesus has done and is doing in your life and in the lives of those you reach with the gospel. This is what Peter and John did when Jesus changed the life of the lame beggar. Luke writes of the event, “While he was clinging to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them at the so-called portico of Solomon, full of amazement. But when Peter saw *this*, he replied to the people, ‘Men of Israel, why are you amazed at this, or why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power or piety we had made him walk? The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, *the one* whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release Him. But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, but put to death the Prince of life, *the one* whom God raised from the dead, *a fact* to which we are witnesses. And on the basis of faith in His name, *it is* the name of Jesus which has strengthened this man whom you see and know; and the faith which *comes* through Him has given him this perfect health in the presence of you all” (Acts 3:11-16). Notice Peter spoke up and presented the gospel giving the Lord Jesus the credit for the changed life of the lame beggar. We must regularly and intentionally share with others the great work God is doing in our lives and through our lives. God will use these testimonies to bring life change into the lives of others.

4. Be Intentional with our invitation.

Let us be sure to invite people to make a decision when we testify about Jesus. This is what Peter and John did. Luke writes, “And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also. But the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, ...” (Acts 3:17-20). Did you catch it? Peter challenged his listeners to repent so they could be forgiven. He challenged them to turn from their sin and embrace the Savior—the Lord Jesus. We, too, must invite people to make a decision.

Missions is not just a trip; it is a lifestyle. We must be intentional each day as we go about our business and look for opportunities to share with our neighbors and the nations as God opens doors.

Thanks for joining us today, and remember God loves you and so do we!