

# God's Love Goes Out - MissionSHIP

Scripture: Acts 2: 42-47 / Matthew 28: 19-20

Date: July 19, 2020

## **DOORWAY WITH JESUS**

I was born and raised in a church. Baptized and made a profession / confession of faith and was known and identified as a church member. However, when I was a part of a church camp staff I was surrounded by a group of people who had such a joy and vibrancy about life AND FAITH that I knew that I was on the outside of fellowship with Jesus.

Here at Maranatha over the past few weeks we've been building a structure to represent the various parts of what a church represents. We've identified worship as the foundation, discipleship as the framework and fellowship as the furnishing. We looked last week at how strong Maranatha is in the area of Fellowship in its strengthening and supporting, in its encouraging and empowering of those as part of its body.

The Acts 2 text speaks of the fellowship within the early church. They were of like mind and unified and devoted to God and to each other. They worshipped God, they prayed, they learned and they supported and empowered one another.

Its these characteristics – in the group from my camp experience, from the text and in our goals as Maranatha – that identify the fellowship within a community. A group called to be one in the Spirit - regardless of culture, regardless of nationalism, regardless of gender, regardless of education, regardless of denominational affiliation and regardless of skin colour.

A community in unity that all these characteristics are forsaken – in true fellowship because we are redeemed to our value in Christ and we are restored to our wholeness for Christ. It's this place with Jesus – this fragrance of Christ that marks the fellowship of the church. Its appeal to those inside the church in their strength but also to those without to come in. The text speaks of how the early church had the good will of all the people around them – vs. 47. The text speaks of how many were encouraged to come and join – as many did – daily. Not just because of the people – but because of the Christ

## **DOORWAY TO JESUS**

I had found myself loved by people who knew my story of life and faith and yet were gentle and gracious to me. People who encouraged and empowered me as well as challenged and comforted me. But ultimately the decision to go or no go with Jesus was mine – and mine alone. To enter – not the fellowship of the group but the fellowship of the Lord was a door that I had to go through.

Now a door for many is seen in a definitional way – either its open or closed resulting in you being inside or outside. But perhaps it's best seen as decisional – a coming or a going. Seen as a pivot point of a change or an entry point into something else.

Jesus in John 10: 7 speaks of Himself as the door / gate and that no one comes to the Father except through Him. In Matthew 7: 7-14 Jesus invites the listener to *knock and the door will be opened for you*. In Revelation 3: 8, 20 offers the invitation to come through the door when He declares that He *stand at the door and knock*

## **DOORWAY FOR JESUS**

### MISSIONAL PERSPECTIVE – GOD’S MISSION

The door isn’t about in or out but rather a perspective that’s neither inside or outside but rather upward to see God’s calling. Some see the door opening inward allowing entrance into the fellowship of believers. Then they see the door opening outward exiting into the world.

But the door opens both ways – inviting a journey further forward in response to God’s call. For Mission work is not about us. It’s God’s mission – not ours. *Missio – Dei* is the Latin phrase meaning - The Mission of God. David Bosch is quoted as saying - *It is not the church of God that has a mission in the world. It is the God of mission who has a church in the world*

In Acts 2: 47 we see that the LORD added daily to those who were being saved. It is the Lord who is the primary acting agent in mission work. Our mission is to be faithful to God. Our mission is to be obedient to God

### MISSIONAL FOCUS

Mission ministry in church is HUGE and I only want to go over a general focus today. Part of Maranatha YYC identity is Mark 12:30 where the church is called to Love God and to Love their neighbour as themselves. The Great Commandment.

I like to see this as being a connection between the love interests in our lives. We love God and we love those around us and want to connect them together. We see the needs within our culture for Christ to be real – spiritually, economically, socially, politically etc. and desire to connect the needs with the truth of how Christ can meet them.

The challenge of missionship then is to simply live out our faith. Our faith in our worship, our discipleship and our fellowship. Our faith in our forgiveness, our freedom and in our love. Even to live out our faith in our questions, hopes and dreams.

Another part of Maranatha’s identity is 2 Corinthians 5 where the church is called to be ambassadors for Christ. To be representatives of Christ in another culture / country / context etc.

#### SPECIFIC FOCUS OF EVANGELISM - DISCIPLESHIP

Some church groups focus their mission identity in one of two ways. One sees the spiritual need and identifies Matthew 28: 19-20 where the church is called to go and make disciples – to make new believers. The focus is on sharing / teaching the gospel message of Jesus Christ. Part of God’s mission IS the proclamation of the gospel. We are challenged in 1 Peter 3: 15 to declare the hope that lies with in us – the reason WHY we believe .

#### SPECIFIC FOCUS OF SERVICE - PRESENCE

Other church groups focus on the call to the church to serve the needs of a broken and hurting world in a physical way. James 2 challenges the church to put its faith into action. In Matthew 25 Jesus challenges the church to feed the poor, visit the imprisoned, or clothe the marginalized and in doing that they will see Jesus. In being the hands and the feet of Jesus – the presence of Jesus will shine like a light on a hill as the Matthew 7 text tells us.

Both of these remain true in missional living. There is a time and a place to serve the physical needs of this broken and hurting world and – if we look and listen well enough – there is also a time and a place to speak into the spiritual needs of this broken and hurting world as well. To be entry points into an awareness and – by God’s grace and power – acceptance of God’s truth.

#### MCRC MISSIONSHIP

At Maranatha YYC we have various entry points into those conversations - Movie Night, Bowness Community Dinner, Pancake Breakfast during Calgary Stampede, Friday Community Dinner. Most recently we’ve built a Food Pantry and Book library on our property to help the resiliency of the needs of those living around the church.

Our ‘Go Local’ ministry challenges us to engage those in our world around us – our neighbourhood, our work / school places, when we shop etc. To live our faith wherever we are in our life. Our mission field is wherever we are.

Even in the mist of Covid 19 pandemic where we are restricted into distancing and sanitizing there remains opportunities to engage the worlds around us. To pray, to listen, to love, to respond to gospel of Jesus and the grace of Jesus.

#### **MY STORY**

My friends became missionaries to me, they became worshippers with me, they became disciplers of me while growing into fellowship with me. Their mission was to love God and to love me. My mission was to go into the worlds in which I lived – and do the same.

God’s mission – to love Him and to love those around me for Him.

AMEN