

Treasure in Clay Jars

Lesson Twelve: Principles With Which to Move Forward

Outcome Objectives:

1. Learners will examine biblical principles with which the disciples of Jesus took the good news throughout the world.
2. Learners will explore principles for taking the good news of scripture boldly into God's future.
3. Learners will encourage each other to live as ministers and missionaries in the 21st Century.

Introduction

1. Teachers will remind learners of the biblical mandate to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:18-29).
2. Elmer Towns writes in his book, **Getting A Church Started**, which is free at www.elmertowns.com that Jesus **commissioned** his disciples in John 20:21; he gave them a **strategy** in Matthew 28:18-20; he provided **content** (preaching repentance and forgiveness of sin is based on the resurrection of Christ) in Luke 24:46-48; and he gave them a **context** (Jerusalem to uttermost part of the earth) in Acts 1:8..
 - **Commission:** In its simplest form, Jesus explained, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). Since the Father has sent Jesus to “seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10), we are sent in the same manner as Jesus—by the Father, to seek and save the lost.
 - **Strategy:** The word “nation” in Matthew 28:18 is better translated every “people” or “ethnic group.” We are to go to all people groups with the unchanging message and put it into “cultural containers” to reach people where they are and take them to where they need to go.
 - **Content:** Luke 24:47 instructs disciples to proclaim “repentance and forgiveness based upon the resurrection.” Christ proclaims when he is lifted up all people are drawn to him (John 12:32).
 - **Context:** Power from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8) provided first century Christians with all that was needed to be witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

That same power today enables all of us to spread the gospel of Jesus with confidence locally, regionally, and globally.

Exploration

1. Teachers will find a helpful outline in Ed Stetzer's book, **Planting New Churches in a Postmodern Age**,¹ to encourage every disciple to take the gospel of Jesus to their local context, to the region in which they live, and globally to all people groups..
 - I. Church Planting in Jerusalem-"locally" (Acts 1-7)
 - A. Its Origin
 1. Born in prayer (1:12-14)
 2. Bathed in the Spirit (2:1-4)
 3. Begun with proclamation (2:14-39)
 4. Baptized in the name of Jesus (2:41)
 - B. Its Functions
 1. Doctrinal Teaching (2:42)
 2. Fellowship (2:42)
 3. Worship (2:42, 46)
 4. Prayer (2:42; 4:29-31)
 5. Benevolence (2:44-45; 4:34-25)
 6. Identification with the community (2:47)
 7. Witness (4:33; 5:42)
 - C. Its Growth
 1. Three thousand baptized at Pentecost (2:41)
 2. People saved daily (2:47)
 3. Multitudes added (5:14)
 4. Religious leaders believed (6:7)
 - II. Church Planting in Judea and Samaria –"regionally" (Acts 8-12)
 - A. Church planting done by Christians (8:1, 4)
 - B. Mass evangelism (8:5-6; 12)
 - C. Village evangelism (8:25)
 - D. Churches multiplied (9:31)
 - E. Salvation extended to Gentiles (10:44-48)

¹ Broadman and Holman Publishers produced this book in 2003. Stetzer has planted churches in New York and Pennsylvania. A former seminary professor, he now directs the Nehemiah Project of North American Mission Board, helping recruit and training church planters.

III. Church Planting in the World-“globally” (Acts 13-28)

- A. Scattered laity started Jewish churches (II:19)
 - B. Antioch became the great missionary church (13:2-3)
 - C. Paul’s First Missionary Journey (13-14)
 - D. Paul’s Second Missionary Journey (15:40-18:22)
 - E. Paul’s Third Missionary Journey (18:23-21:17)
2. The life of Paul and the activities of the first century church demonstrate that early Christians believed in and practiced living missional lives locally, regionally and internationally.

Response

1. Writing in **The Shape of Things to Come: Innovation and Mission for the 21st Century Church**,² Frost and Hirsch make numerous suggestions for taking the gospel to the 21st Century world.
2. It is recommended that you develop the statements into an “agree/disagree” format, and invite the learners to state if they agree or disagree with the statement. A fun way to get agreement/disagreement is to have participants put their thumb “up” if they agree and put it “down” if they disagree. If they disagree, ask them to rewrite the statement in such a way that they could agree. (Attachment One)

² This book raises enormous challenges for God’s people in North America. Our time is an era when the need for, and the relevance of, the gospel has seldom been less. If ever there was a time for missions locally, regionally, and globally, it is now.

Principles For Moving Forward Missionally

Agree	Disagree	1.	The majority of learning and training must take place in one's workplace or mission setting, not in the church building.
Agree	Disagree	2.	Since context is critical, most people will not learn to be missional unless they are out of their comfort zone.
Agree	Disagree	3.	Learning to live missionally happens only when there is time for reflection and discussion with those in the community.
Agree	Disagree	4.	Without coaching sessions from leaders in the faith community, it will be almost impossible for Christians today to have the courage to live missional lives in the 21 st Century.
Agree	Disagree	5.	Church leaders cannot teach what they do not know and they cannot lead where they have not been. Leaders must lead missionally from direct and current experiences in their lives.
Agree	Disagree	6.	People are not primarily motivated by information but by inspiration.
Agree	Disagree	7.	Evangelism will spring up in our congregation when all Christians develop spiritual imagination for living missional lives.