

RINGTONES "OUTGOING CALL" JOHN 20:19-23

This Week's Core Competency

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes. Romans 12:1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*

In John 20:21 Jesus told his disciples, "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (TEV). Just as the Father sent him into the world so also he sends his disciples into the world. But does Jesus' use of *comparison* extend beyond simply being sent ones? If it does extend, for example, to the notion of mission, then just as Jesus was sent on a mission to the world so also he sends his disciples on a mission to the world. By implication, then, Jesus' disciples ought to live their lives on mission like he did. Put differently, they ought to live missionally or as the creed says, they ought "to give away their lives to fulfill God's purposes."

The following comments on what it means to be missional may help clarify the notion. "A proper understanding of *missional* begins with recovering a missionary understanding of God. By his very nature God is a 'sent one' who takes the initiative to redeem his creation. This doctrine, known as *missio Dei*—the sending of God—is causing many to redefine their understanding of the church. Because we are the

By his very nature God is a "sent one" who takes the initiative to redeem his creation.

– Alan Hirsch

'sent' people of God, the church is the instrument of God's mission in the world. As things stand, many people see it the other way around. They believe mission is an instrument of the church; a means by which the church is grown. Although we frequently say 'the church has a mission,' according to missional theology a more correct statement would be 'the mission has a church.'

Many churches have mission statements or talk about the importance of mission, but where truly missional churches differ is in their posture toward the world. A missional community sees the mission as both its originating impulse and its organizing principle. A missional community is patterned after what God has done in Jesus Christ. In the incarnation God sent his Son. Similarly, to be missional means to be sent into the world; we do not expect people to come to us. This posture differentiates a missional church from an attractional church.

The attractional model, which has dominated the church in the West, seeks to reach out to the culture and draw people into the church—what I call outreach and in-grab. But this model only works where no significant cultural shift is required when moving from outside to inside the church. And as Western culture has become increasingly post-Christian, the attractional model has lost its effectiveness. The West looks more like a cross-cultural missionary context in which attractional church models are self-defeating. The process of extracting people from the culture and assimilating them into the church diminishes their ability to speak to those outside. *People cease to be missional and instead leave that work to the clergy.*

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A missional theology is not content with mission being a church-based work. Rather, *it applies to the whole life of every believer. Every disciple is to be an agent of the kingdom of God, and every disciple is to carry the mission of God into every sphere of life. We are all missionaries sent into a non-Christian culture*" (Alan Hirsch, "Defining Missional," *Leadership*, Fall [2008]).

Here's the point to remember: living missionally means living as Jesus' agent in the world. Living missionally doesn't mean becoming a vocational pastor or foreign missionary. Dallas dentists remain Dallas dentists; Springfield moms remain Springfield moms; Miami mechanics remain Miami mechanics; Seattle carpenters remain Seattle carpenters; Omaha office managers remain Omaha office managers; Toledo granddads remain Toledo granddads; you get the picture. It means being Christ's disciple in whatever sphere of work, in whatever community, in whatever church you're in. It involves going beyond in your church, in your neighborhood, and in your world.

For Discussion

According to one Catholic layperson, "the Catholic Church believes that 'Only God forgives sin.' When a penitent person asks God for forgiveness, his (or her) sins are immediately forgiven. Catholics also believe that when someone sins they not only hurt their relationship with God, they also injure the entire church, the body of Christ. Jesus said, 'I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matthew 16:19). 'And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained'" (John 20:22-23). Oral confessing of sins is recommended over and over in both the Old and New Testaments. The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation with a priest ordained in the name of Jesus Christ not only reconciles the sinner to God but with the entire church, including you and me." Sounds like Catholics and Protestants are on the same page when it comes to who forgives whom—right?

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

John 20:19-23

19 *On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!"* 20 *After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.*

21 *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."* 22 *And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."* (NIV (c)1984)

Cf. another translation

So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained." (NASB)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Box "that" specifying which "first day" in v. 19.
- * Circle "disciples" in v. 19.
- * Box "for" indicating *reason* in v. 19.
- * Circle "the Jews" in v. 19.
- * Bracket the greeting in vv. 19, 21.
- * Underline "he showed them his hands and side" in v. 20.
- * Box "as . . . so" indicating *comparison* in v. 21.
- * Highlight v. 23.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Summarize what had happened earlier on that first day of the week. (Jn 20:1-18).
2. In the sentence beginning in verse 19, John indicates a meeting was held behind locked doors that evening. Who was there?
3. In the same sentence, he adds the doors were locked because those in the room were afraid. Understandably or no-explain.
4. Then he says, "Jesus came and stood among them." What do you infer from John's statement?
5. And he says Jesus said, "Peace be with you." Why do you think Jesus repeated this greeting twice?
6. Why would Jesus show them his hands and his side?
7. Explain the point of the *comparison* in verse 21.
8. Jesus said, "I am sending you." When did the disciples actually go?
9. **Discussion:** Talk about what the Holy Spirit has to do with the ones being sent.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

On the evening of the *same* day Mary Magdalene discovered Jesus' tomb was empty (Jn 20:1; cf., Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:1-8; Lk 24:1-12), Jesus appeared to his disciples behind locked doors (Jn 20:19-21). Judging by all that had happened that day, not to mention all that had happened that weekend, they had to be wondering what would happen next. Earlier that day Jesus appeared to Mary at the tomb (vv. 11-18), to two travelers on the road to Emmaus (Lk 24:13-32), and to Peter in Jerusalem (24:34). That evening the disciples met to rehearse recent events and deal with their doubts. They met behind locked doors for good reason. The Jewish authorities that arrested Jesus and saw to it that he was crucified could easily do the same to them. Ten, perhaps more, were in the dimly lit room when Jesus "came and stood among them" (v. 19). John doesn't explain how Jesus miraculously entered the room; the doors were locked! He leaves it to his readers to infer that locked doors could not keep the *resurrected* Jesus out. He greeted them with common words, which carried an uncommon meaning on this occasion. One author writes, "His words 'peace be with you' (repeated in 20:19 and 21) were a standard Hebrew greeting (Judg. 6:23; 19:20; 1 Sam. 25:6; 3 John 1:15), still used in the Middle East today. But here these words are far more than a greeting. At a profoundly personal level, Jesus is summing up the essence of his work and presence in the world. Peace is the gift of his kingdom. In 14:27 and 16:33 Jesus promised that this peace would be his gift to them, now he has delivered it" (Gary M. Burge, *The NIV Application Commentary: John*, 558). Immediately, he showed them his hands to prove that he was, in fact, the crucified one. "The disciples' response (20:20) to his appearance-after they see the evidence of his wounds-is likewise a fulfillment of what was promised, 'I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, *but your grief will turn to joy . . . Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy'* (16:20-22, italics added). Once they see Jesus in this room, the disciples are filled with joy" (558).

Then Jesus tells them, "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (v. 21 TEV). Jesus lived his life as a sent one; his disciples are to likewise live as sent ones. The Father sent Jesus on a mission to the world; Jesus sends his disciples on a mission to the world. Living life on mission isn't about becoming a vocational pastor or foreign missionary, neither is it about living a bifurcated life. Living life on mission isn't about living a secular life during the week and a sacred life on the weekend; it's about living one life that integrates the two. Living life as a sent one "*applies to the whole life of every believer. Every disciple is to be an agent of the kingdom of God, and every disciple is to carry the mission of God into every sphere of life. We are all missionaries sent into a non-Christian culture*" (Hirsch).

What Jesus did and said next is difficult to understand. He breathed and said "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." The first difficulty pertains to the relationship of a giving of the Spirit on Easter to a giving on the Spirit on Pentecost. Some see the first as a *symbolic* giving in anticipation of the *actual* giving. The fact that the disciples did not leave Jerusalem until after Pentecost even though Jesus said "so I send you" on Easter suggests as much. Some see the first as a *partial* giving of the Spirit that somehow prepared the disciples for a *fuller* giving seven weeks later. But giving the Spirit in part is hard to imagine. Finally, some see the giving of the Spirit on Easter as the *only* giving of the Spirit *for John*. "John does not anticipate another gift of the Spirit. He gives no hint of something to come, and if we did not possess the narrative of Acts, we would easily conclude that John 20 fulfills all of Jesus' promises" (Burge, 560). But we do possess the narrative of Acts, and in the mind of Luke and the preaching of Peter the giving of the Spirit on Pentecost is the *only* giving of the Spirit "promised by the Father" (Ac 1:4, 5) that pertains to the promise of Joel (2:16-21). All things considered, first interpretation is best.

The second difficulty pertains to whether Jesus gave the apostles and by extension church leaders

later his authority to forgive sins. This difficulty is easier to resolve than the first. The short answer is no; Jesus did not give the apostles his authority to forgive sins. One author explains, "God does not forgive men's sins because we decide to do so or withhold forgiveness because we will not grant it. We announce it; we do not create it. All those who

proclaim the gospel are in effect forgiving or not forgiving sins, depending on whether the hearer accepts or rejects the Lord Jesus as the Sin-Bearer" (Merrill C. Tenney, "John," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 9:193).

The Message of this Passage
As the Father sent Jesus on his mission to the world,
so Jesus sends us on our mission to the world.

day 4 EMBRACE – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James suggests in James 1:22. Try some of the challenges below to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your thoughts on the passage:**

–Write about what God wants you to know . . .

–Write about how God wants you to feel . . .

–Write about what God wants you to do . . .

“Outgoing Call”

(Use the space below for Sunday's message notes)

notes STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 19 *the disciples* "How large a group is referred to by the disciples is not certain, but in the light of the circle at the last supper (made up of Jesus plus the Twelve, and then, after Judas Iscariot left, the Eleven), and in the light of the fact that Thomas is singled out as not having been present (v.24)—though doubtless there were countless other 'disciples' less tightly connected with the Lord who were also not present—we should probably think of the Ten (i.e. the Twelve, less Judas and Thomas)" (D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, PNTC, 646). "If the occasion is that referred to in Luke 24:33 there were others present, for Luke expressly mentions them" (Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, NICNT, 845).

v. 19 *locked* The disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid the Jews would send a detachment to arrest them as they had Jesus. Jewish authorities had seen to it that Jesus was executed; they could more easily pick off his followers had they decided to do so.

v. 19 *Jesus came* "The function of the locked doors in John's narrative, both here and in v. 26, is to stress the miraculous nature of Jesus' appearance amongst his followers. As his resurrection body passed through the grave-clothes (v. 6-8), so it passed through the locked doors and simply 'materialized'" (Carson, 646).

v. 19, 20 *peace* "At one level, the greeting *Peace be with you!* is conventional, representing Hebrew [*shalom alekhem*], still in use today. Indeed, perhaps when the disciples first heard the risen Lord utter it, they thought little of it, being so astonished and overjoyed that linguistic subtleties would elude them. But the repetition of the greeting (vv. 21, 26) would eventually prompt the reflective amongst them to recall that Jesus before the cross had promised to bequeath to them his peace (14:27; 16:33)" (646, 47). Jesus could have rebuked them for their unfaithfulness and cowardice the previous weekend, but instead he spoke peace to them to reassure them and renew their hopes.

v. 20 *side* Jesus proves he is the disciples' crucified, risen Master. Others who were crucified could show the wounds in their hands and feet. Only he could show the wound in his side.

v. 21 *sending* "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (TEV; the NET Bible); cf., "I sent them into the world, just as you sent me into the world (17:18 [TEV, the NET Bible]).

v. 22 *on them* Lit., "He breathed, and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'" (652; Morris, 846). The words "on them" are added in many English translations. The significance of what Jesus did and the sense of what he said and the relationship of both to Acts 2 are much debated (see the summary of the debate in Carson, 649-55). Perhaps it's best to regard verse 22 as a *symbolic* promise of the gift of the Spirit later to be given at Pentecost. "John 20:22 is not mere symbolism anticipating an endowment of the Spirit that is nowhere mentioned, it is symbolism anticipating the endowment of the Spirit that the church at the time of writing has already experienced, and of which outsiders are inevitably aware" (655).

v. 23 *if . . . forgiven* Lit., "If you forgive [*aorist* tense] the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven [*perfect* tense] them; if you retain [*aorist* tense] the sins of any, they have been retained [*perfect* tense]" (NASB), or perhaps, "they stand forgiven" versus "they do not stand forgiven." The *passive* voice implies God is doing the forgiving. "Jesus was giving the apostles (and by extension, the church) the privilege of announcing heaven's terms on how a person can receive forgiveness. If one believes in Jesus, then a Christian has the right to announce his forgiveness. If a person rejects Jesus' sacrifice, then a Christian can announce that that person is not forgiven" (Edwin A. Blum, "John," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 343).

Connect the **FAMILY**. During this series, Bible stories appropriate for children will be used that complement the adult teaching.

Experience it!

Experience scripture through the activity-based learning exercise. Dinner is a perfect time to engage the family.

If a parent tells you something twice, it means they are really serious about what they are saying! Read John 20:19-22. Jesus' disciples were seriously reminded how much he loved them after he twice said, "Peace be with you." He then wanted them to go (that's what you do when someone sends you somewhere) and love others the same way. Don't make Jesus tell you twice to do the same thing!

Pray it!

As a parent you can teach your child to pray by using actual scriptures as a guide. Pray this scripture with them this week..

Father, in view of your mercy, I offer my body as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to You. It is my spiritual act of worship.

Ro 12:1

Post it!

Post the kid-friendly Core Competency and the memory verse throughout the house. Lead your children to interact with them as they memorize.

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to help with God's work.

Memory verse – "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

Jn 15:12

Discuss it!

Discover biblical truth by discussing the scripture. Reflective questions are great with older kids.

- *Why were the disciples so surprised to see Jesus standing among them?
- *Why did Jesus show the disciples his hands and feet?
- *What expression did Jesus repeat?
- *What did Jesus send the disciples to do?

Live it!

Live out the Core Competency and build deeper relationships by doing this activity.

Giving away your life requires action. You will have to get up and go! Invite a friend to attend church with you this week even if it means having to get up earlier to go pick them up.

Kids K through fourth grade receive Kid Pix Tokens for each discipleship activity completed.



Family completes **Experience It** _____
 Child memorizes kid-friendly **Core Competency** _____
 Family participates in **Live It** _____ and **Pray It** _____
 Child memorizes **Memory Verse** _____

Child's name _____

Parent's signature _____

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.