



The Mission

Dismiss Children

If you are just joining us this week, we are completing a five-week series called “**What’s Missing.**”

Summary of Samson’s Life:

- Birth and mission
- Never sanctified himself, never set himself apart for God’s mission for his life
- Samson’s life never reached its potential

When we American’s think about our mission as Christians, we tend to cast ourselves as the headline of the mission like Samson did. He made himself - his own emotions, appetites and desires - his life mission...

- I’ll take the wife I want
- I’ll sleep with whoever I want
- I’ll get the girlfriend I want
- I’ll treat my parents the way I want to
- I’ll use my strengths to exploit the weaknesses of others (wager and murder for clothes)
- I’ll eat what I want to
- I’ll live the way I want to live
- I’ll take revenge on those who hurt me if I get the chance

Like Samson, we like to put ourselves at the center of our mission for our lives. What Samson failed to realize is that he was not born and then given a mission. ***Samson was born to complete the mission God had for his life...***

Judges 13:3-5

3 And the angel of the Lord appeared to the woman [Samson’s mother] and said to her, “Behold, you are barren and have not borne children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4 Therefore be careful and drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean, 5 for behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb, and he shall begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines.”

God sanctified Samson from birth for *His* mission, not Samson's agenda. This reality is not limited to Samson. Look at what the Scripture teaches about God's calling from before birth:

David declared God's sovereignty in his life from before his birth...

Psalm 139:13-16 - For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ***Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.***

God told Jeremiah the prophet that He knew him and had a purpose for him before his birth...

Jeremiah 1:5 - "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

Paul recognized God had called him from before his birth...

Galatians 1:15 - But when he who had set me apart before I was born, and who called me by his grace,

This life is not about you. Your life is all about God. You were not born and then given a mission. You were born to complete God's mission. That is what your life is all about. **What is God's mission?**

Matthew 28:19-20

Go therefore and ***make disciples of all nations***, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Matthew 4:19

And he said to them, "***Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.***"

Acts 1:8

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and ***you will be my witnesses*** in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and ***to the end of the earth.***"

Why is this your mission? Because from the beginning God has been actively working to reconcile mankind to himself, and He calls us to join Him in His mission...

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

God's mission is to reconcile the world to Himself, and He created us to join Him in that mission. This is how we bring God glory.

At this point, I need to call “time-out” before I arrive at a typical Southern Baptist invitation. I need to point out to you that I am not calling on you today to “become a better neighbor” or “reach someone for Jesus” or “go share your faith with someone who is lost, or at least invite them to church!”

These things aren’t bad things to do, they are just surface stuff. I am extending an invitation of the heart this morning. The invitation is to recognize that, like Samson, you were created for a purpose. And, like Samson, you will never be satisfied until you align yourself to God’s mission for which He created you.

Everything that exists, exists because of God and for God...

Romans 11:36 - For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.

Revelation 4:11 - “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

God is the center of the universe, not us. His mission is central, not ours. You were created and born for God’s mission, not your own.

Humans all have a strong bent towards mission drift.

- Story of Adam and Even in the garden. Why couldn’t they leave well enough alone? Their passion for what they wanted consumed them.
 - Bible to face to show mission drift.

Whatever mission we embrace will consume our lives...

- Parenting / Family
- Spouse
- Friends
- Career
- Philanthropy
- Traveling
- Comfort
- Avoiding pain



(put this picture up as I start through the list above it.)

Personal Example: College Education

- It has been SO hard for me to avoid mission drift in school! I am bent to make *FINISHING* my mission! My mission is not to finish school. My mission is to walk through every stage of life with God’s mission at the center of my life. How does God want to use this season to conform me more into His image and make me more effective for the mission I was born to fulfill?

Human missions are NEVER good substitutes for the mission we were created to fulfill, no matter how noble or enjoyable the substitute may be.

Here's the problem...

The problem with Christian people is that we believe Christianity is a destination...

If I could just... (stop sinning, reach someone for Jesus, learn "so much" about the Bible, etc.).

If there is a destination in Christianity it is heaven. Christianity is not a destination; it is a journey...

- Dieting and exercising to lose 20 pounds vs. living a healthy lifestyle
- Going to school to get a degree vs. going to school grow as a person and prepare for what you believe God has for you in the future
- Saving just enough money to get by vs. developing a strategy to do your best to provide for your own throughout the remainder of your life
- An addict staying sober for 30 days or detoxing vs. commitment to ongoing recovery
- Volunteering on a mission trip vs. committing your life to be a team player in God's church and doing your part as a member of God's team to complete God's mission



(Jo, use these pictures to match the bullet points above.)

The heart of a lot of people is that Christianity is about my life becoming "better..." (a better dad, better citizen, better church member, better spouse, better employee, better at taking care of my body, better with my time choices, better in the way I spend money, etc.).

The Bible is not a recipe book for me to take a little of this and a little of that, sprinkle it in, and make my life better. The Bible is about making *me* better... Making me look more like Jesus:

Romans 8:29-30 - For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

The Bible isn't about you! The Bible is the story of Jesus Christ and it is the plum line for truth. Where you come in is that you take your life and align it to God's Word. Sanctified, set apart...

John 17:16-19 - They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.

Christianity is not actually about you. Your salvation is not even ultimately about you! Yes, God loved you and saved you. But everything is from Him and through Him and for Him!! His glory, His

mission, His purpose, His life, His story... not yours. If you miss this, you miss an essential part of the gospel!!

Sometimes the church believes that Jesus gave a mission to the church. NO!! Jesus built a church for His mission!!! This mission was established long before you were born and long before the church was born.

My life really isn't about arriving at a destination or even about me become "better." This life is about Jesus, and I have been invited to go on a journey with Him... and there is not a destination. It is about the journey! A journey with Jesus and with His people. All I really am is clay in the potter's hands.

This is so hard for American Christians because we are so hard and so trained that we are the center. If we were honest many would either say "I have some pretty cool gifts and Jesus is lucky to have me" or "I don't have any gifts so Jesus can't use me." The right heart is that we exist for Jesus and what we have is from Him and for Him.

You were created for the mission. What you have been given both naturally and supernaturally is a gift of God that you are called to use for His purpose! He has invited you to be part of His story! Sanctify (set apart) what you have for God, no matter how much or how little!

This is what Samson missed. He made himself the headline.
We can't afford to miss it.

One final important reality: Not only is the mission not about you, but neither is the method.

Have you got this idea down yet? God is central. His mission is central... His method is also essential.

Jesus came to do the Father's work, and He left it in the hands of the church to complete the work. Not in your hands, in the hands of His Church led by His Spirit.

- *No supper Christians or ninja Christians*
- MANY MEMBERS, ONE BODY, CHRIST IS THE HEAD.

As we saw earlier, God's mission for your life is that you would make disciples of the nations. How is that even possible? It is only possible in the context of community, in the context of completing the mission as a team, in the context of His Church.

John 17:20-23

"I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.

We are one in Christ! For what purpose? So that the world may know that Jesus sent us.

A Look at the Original Context: Church is not an individual idea; it is a team idea.

Teamwork in the Church:

- Jesus recruited a team of disciples
- Paul had a team of disciples
- The early church met under biblical leadership in homes as a team of disciples
- Barnabas had a team of disciples

Discipleship is a team sport! Church is a team sport! It is not an individual event. We accomplish the mission in the context of community and teamwork. That is the only way we can all fulfill God's mission – we must do it together.

At Western Hills Church, we fulfill the mission to make disciples together in groups. Each group has...

1. **An intentional leader** who is a more mature disciple who can facilitate spiritual growth in the group
2. **A relational environment** where people can share life together and grow spiritually in Christian community
3. **A biblical foundation** where people can hear and discuss the Word of God and how it applies to their lives
4. **A reproducible process** where new leadership can be identified, equipped, and released to start (or branch) more groups

Example: Recent 102 Class (4 out of 5 of the class participants were new people that were connected through team discipleship efforts! In fact, two group leaders even attended with their people!)

Our groups are about using God's method (team discipleship) to include every believer to accomplish God's mission (make disciples of the nations). This is what we were born to do!

Challenge:

Not asking you to try to become a better evangelist. Not all of us do that well! But we can all love people and invite them to our group where, as a team, we can lead them to Jesus.

Not asking you to try to meet with someone one to one for discipleship. Not all of us can make that happen! But we can all disciple others as we share biblical truths around God's Word in our groups.

Not asking you to lead a class or start a new Bible study. Not all of us are gifted for that kind of work.

The things listed above naturally flow out of lives that are committed to making Jesus' mission their mission and making disciples His way – as a team player in His Church.

I appeal to you:

1. Embrace the reality that you were created for God's purposes and not your own
2. Sanctify yourself (set yourself apart) to fulfill God's mission God's way – reach the world for Christ as a team player in His Church

As the Lord leads, you can do that with Western Hills Church if you desire:

1. Join a Group wall – Join a Group THIS WEEK and start making disciples with a team
2. Attend 101 on June 12th after the service (please sign up online or let me know you are coming)
3. Consider if the Lord is calling you to start a new group – if He is, please let me know

(Jo, make the two lists come up on the same slide, but wait to put up each list until I get to it.)

Bow for Prayer... Instructions for alter call... Jon starts playing...

End of Samson's life – what a tragedy. Climbing wrong ladder. Don't miss it. Not about cars, boats, toys, and games. Not even about family, friends, education, career, or the like. It is about God and His Mission. Lay down your human identities, pick up your new identity in Christ.

Picking up God's mission starts by setting down your own mission to free your hands...

How have you made it about you? Don't miss this opportunity. Sanctify yourself. Respond to the call embrace God's mission for your life. You were born for this. You were created for this.

Pray and invite (guys sing chorus).

Will you lay down your own causes for the cause of Christ? Will you surrender your life for His mission and commit yourself to His method by becoming a team player in the Church as we seek to make disciples together?

Any other prayer needs this morning? Come forward.

- Stand in for Cecil
- Jerry Martin? Stand in if needed.
- Any other prayer needs?

2 or more.

Pray and dismiss