**Session 1**

**Missional**

When you think of the word “missional” you mind probably automatically runs to the other word “missionary”. This carries with it the idea of going somewhere else to be on mission. It could be short term or long term, but the most common association that people make with the word “missional” is the concept of going somewhere for a specific time.

Now it is true that part of being missional is being willing to go to the unreached people of the earth and share the gospel. But that is not all that it means to be missional.

If any of you have been on mission trip you know that you act differently while you are on the trip. Your priorities for being there are defined by the mission – to share the gospel and make disciples.

(Share experience of Croatia, St. Croix, Memphis, etc.)

But why does it take us packing up and going to another country in order to live in a “missional” way? Why do we need to buy a plane ticket or pack a bag to “get on mission”?

Being missional means that an everyday believer, not the “super Christian”, is looking to be faithful with divine appointments and teachable moments that God gives you during your life. God will load up your schedule with divine appointments and teachable moments if you will be intentional about the way that you live as a disciple.

Being evangelistic is not the same thing as being missional. You can be evangelistic, but not missional. When we think of evangelism, we think of an event or a particular moment with people. But missionalliving is the realization that you are full time on mission for God. It is not about a place, but it is about a priority in our lives.

**Missional Living Requires a Supernatural Power (Acts 1:8)**

The Holy Spirit and power are the same concept. Dynamite is not the concept behind the Greek word *dunimas* because dynamite was not invented until 1866 and because dynamite rips things apart and destroys. D. A. Carson says that the power of God which Paul speaks about often is referring to the power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead and brings wholeness and completion

Mark attempts to show his readers that Jesus is of the same power of God.

 1:13 – Jesus had authority over the animals

 1:13 – Jesus had authority over the angels

 1:22 – Jesus had authority to teach

 1:34 – Jesus had authority to heal

 1:34 – Jesus had authority over demons

 2:9 – Jesus had authority to forgive sins

 2:27 – Jesus had authority over the Sabbath

 3:15 – Jesus had the authority to give authority

Jesus is showing us time and time again that he is God. It should motivate us to be fearless in sharing the gospel. This is why the Great Commission is so great – because all authority had been given to Jesus. Essentially, he is saying “You cannot lose this thing.”

Andrew was an introvert, Peter had a foot-shaped mouth, John didn’t like people very much, Matthew was an IRS agent, and Simon the Zealot was a political extremist. Why in the world would Jesus pick these guys? For the same reason that Jesus chose you. He wanted to demonstrate his power through others’ weaknesses.

The only textbook that we need to make disciples is the Bible and the power that is required to make disciples is the Holy Spirit of God.

**Missional Living Forces Us to Have a Single-Minded Purpose (Acts 1:8)**

This charge to be disciples in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth is preceded by question about the kingdom. Jesus’ response was not concerned about when he would come back to initiate the kingdom, but it was about what the disciples would be busy doing while he was away.

It is incredible the amount of time that people dedicate to trying to chart out the exact timeline of events of Jesus’ second coming and watching for signs and events that might give more clues, while at the same time neglect the commandment of Jesus to go and make disciples.

We know that Jesus is coming back. We know the end of the story. So don’t miss the chance that we have in this short period of time before he returns to make disciples. We have an opportunity to help inaugurate the kingdom more and more as we witness to others about Jesus.

A witness is a mirror and it’s a billboard. No one looks at a mirror and comments on the quality of the glass. And no one looks at a billboard and comments on the quality of the screen printing of the ad that is displayed. These two things are advertising something else and not themselves. A witness is not drawing attention to themselves; a witness reflects something else. So as Christians we should be witnesses of Christ.

Ask yourself, “When people see me, do they see Christ?” That is missional living. It is about everyday life. Missional living is not for the super extraordinary Christ, but it is for the everyday Christian in a familiar town – not just for overseas.

Jesus starts in Acts 1:8 in Jerusalem, which was their local context. For us this is our local context as well. We are expected to look for divine appointments and teachable moments wherever we are. We shouldn’t neglect our neighbors across the street to go to those across our country. The greatest mission field that God has given us is the one that he has placed us in right now.

**So how do we live missionally?** **How do we have a missional mindset?** Here are three ways:

1. **Write out your testimony and be prepared to share it.** Now this doesn’t have to be a long process. It’s a five-minute explanation of your life. A testimony consists of your life before Christ, what happened when you came to Christ, and what has happened since coming to Christ. “Go into the world and since words are necessary, use words.” How will they hear unless someone is sent? It is not enough to live as a good person before people because they may not know why you are a good person. We need to be able to share our testimony because you can’t argue with a changed life. Success in evangelism is not in the saving – that’s for God. It’s sharing the gospel faithfully. You are helping people move closer to Jesus one step at a time in a ten-thousand step journey to Him.
2. **We need to foster intentional friendships that lead to lifestyle evangelism.** The greatest mission field that you are planted in is your neighborhood and your workplace. You befriend them and start listening to other peoples’ stories. Begin to offer to pray for people as a way to open a door.
3. **Make room in your schedule for divine appointments.** Maybe the reason you are not seeing more of God in your life is because you are too busy for him. God is trying to schedule things in your life, but your calendar manages your life. You either manage your calendar, or your calendar controls you. We are to always be missionally minded because we are always the church. Reggie McNeal in his book *Missional Renaissance* said the following,

“Missional followers of Jesus don’t belong to the church. They are the church. Wherever they are, the church is present. Church is not something outside of themselves that they go to or join or support; it’s something they are. The missional church is not a ‘what’, but a ‘who’. When we think of the church in the ‘what’ mode we focus on something that exists apart from people; something out there that people join, and attend, and support. We try, then, to build great big churches believing that this is God’s plan to engage the world. Inevitably, this preoccupation leads to discussions of how we can do church better… But the church is a ‘who’ mode focus and it means that the people of God are the church. The central task then is developing more faithful followers of Jesus, believing that God has created people to demonstrate his redemptive intentions to the world in and through their lives.”

The greatest apologetic that we can offer to people as we are engaging them is our changed life. The greatest evangelism strategy that Oakhill has is the changed lives of its people. Only you have the relationships that you do with the people that God has put in your life. Imagine what could happen if we all lived missionally.

There is no divide in your life between the sacred and the secular. So you don’t just turn off missions when you leave on Sunday mornings from church. We’re always on mission.

Next time you’re at Walmart, the gas station, the coffee shop be aware of divine appointments that God puts in your path. Pray that God will put people in your path to share with this next week. You may need to linger in the driveway. You may need to go inside to pay for your gas. You may need to frequent the same restaurant. You may need to linger in the break room for discussion. You may need to invite lost friends over for dinner. You may need to start mentoring at AIS on a regular basis. You may need to start serving others in our food pantry ministry.

In order to be more missional you have to be more **intentional** and more **available** to people. Your home is a mission field to be discipled. Your workplace is a mission field to be discipled. Your neighborhood is a mission field to be discipled.