

Strengths Theology - 07

God is Our Mission

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We have been talking about our mission statement, "Investing In Eternity". One important question we need to answer is this: "Is our mission statement worded so that it moves us to accomplish the mission Christ gave us as a part of His Body the Church?" Our local church mission statement may be worded so that it is personal and understandable to all of us in our day, but it must also be a mission statement that moves us to ultimately accomplish the mission Christ gave His church.

The dictionary defines **MISSION** as a task assigned; the act or instance of sending. A mission tells us what to do.

GOAL is another important word to understand in this discussion. The dictionary defines **GOAL** as the end toward which effort is directed. A goal tells us how to accomplish the mission, it gives us a vision which is often seen as steps of action to take.

So **MISSION** is a task assigned and **GOAL** is the end toward which effort is directed. So we can say that our mission is our assignment and our goal or goals are a vision or visions of the direction and action steps we take to accomplish our mission.

MISSION is an assignment, a **GOAL** is the direction we take, at this moment to move toward the end we have in sight. This vision of the end we have in sight is God. Remember we have discovered how God is our source, our direction, our place, our craftsman, our energy, and our gift. Today we discover that God is our mission. It could be said that Christ gives us an assignment as expressed in (Acts 1:4-8), and we move in a specific direction, at a specific moment in time, toward that end which we must keep in sight. Two weeks ago we looked at this mission statement which we have received from Christ in the book of Acts when we were talking about how God is our Energy. We talked about the needed power of the Holy Spirit in our lives to carry out our mission in taking the love of God home to family and friends. Jesus' commission to His church in (Acts 1:4-8) is both a **MISSION** statement, and a statement revealing the **GOALS** we need to reach toward. In this passage of Scripture Jesus assigns us a task and sends us out, our **MISSION**. And He gives us an end toward which we are to direct our efforts, our **GOAL**. Let's look at the mission statement of Jesus to His Body the Church.

Acts 1:4-8 (NASB)

[4] Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me;

[5] for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

[6] So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at

this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" [7] He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; [8] but you will receive **power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

First the **MISSION** (our assignment, it tells us what to do): Jesus' mission to the church came in two parts. In other words He gave them two assignments, two things to accomplish.

1. Wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit; wait to receive His power before you do anything else.
2. Go and be My witnesses.

Then the **GOAL** (the vision and action steps we take to accomplish our mission): Jesus' goal to the church came in progressive steps.

1. Be my witnesses in Jerusalem
2. Be my witnesses in all Judea
3. Be my witnesses in all Samaria
4. Be my witnesses even to the remotest part of the earth

If Jesus were giving us a goal today it might look something like this:

1. Be my witnesses in Tucson.
2. Be my witnesses in America.
3. Be my witnesses in Canada.
4. Be my witnesses in all the World.

Our **MISSION** statement has an assignment, it tells us what to do. **Invest In Eternity** which means we are to accept and promote the Gospel message of Jesus Christ which is nothing less than the love of God. The explanation of our mission statement contains **GOALS** that are similar to the goals Christ gave the church. We are to **acquire** or accept and **continue** to develop the Gospel message in our personal lives. We are to **take** the Gospel message home to our families and close friends (Jerusalem). We are to **share** the gospel message with our community (Judea). We are to **share** the gospel message literally with our globe (the remotest part of the earth). Throughout Paul's writings in the New Testament he gives us hints and helps for carrying out our Christ given mission here on earth. One of those passages is found in...

Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-13 (NASB)

[1] Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, [2] with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, [3] being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Walk in such a manner so as to be worthy of your calling: That calling is our **mission**. So as we walk through this life to carry out our calling, our **mission**, this is the vision of how we are to walk. This is our goal as set forth by Paul in this passage. We walk in...

- Humility
- Gentleness
- Patience
- Tolerance
- Love
- Diligence
- Unity
- Peace

This kind of a walk shows the love of God to a lost and dying world, a world that hungers for love. I can assure you that all of the world hungers to be loved and to love in return. This love can only be lived out in our lives as we acknowledge the only true source for this kind of love and join in as a member of that loving body.

[4] *There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; [5] one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6] one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.*

In the actions of accomplishing our Mission we are lead by a calling.

- Out of this calling comes one Hope: Hope is the looking forward to an eternal kingdom that we will one day inherit. Our mission calling reveals that we are to share the love of God with our world. This hope, born out of the love of God in our salvation, is our motivation to action. When we have the idea that we receive eternal life in Jesus Christ and there is nothing else to it, no other effort to be made, we have no motivation to take action in fulfilling the mission Christ gives us. God has shown His love for me and given a continuing mission here on this earth.
- Out of this calling comes one Lord: The Lord is the one guide for all that is, or is to be done. That means that there is no other lord in my life. In the past two years God has been revealing Himself to me as the King of kings. A Lord or King has ultimate authority over all of the affairs of each of his subjects. A hard concept to grasp in a country where individual freedom and the election of officials are the norm.
- Out of this calling comes one Faith: Faith is the one element of power that allows us to accomplish anything. When I place my faith in God and what He can accomplish in me, the way He created me to be, I have faith. When I have faith, I will take steps of action to accomplish the mission He has given me as a member of the church, His Body.
- Out of this calling comes one Baptism: Baptism is the one entry point. Not that the physical act of baptism is the way into the Kingdom of God because it

is not, in and of itself, the requirement for entry into the Kingdom of God. It is what baptism symbolically represents that is the entry point into the Kingdom of God. It is a dying of self centeredness and being resurrected to new life in Jesus Christ. It is placing Him at the center of my life, placing Him on the throne of my life. In a broader sense it is the revelation that Jesus is the only way into God's eternal kingdom.

- Out of this calling we see only one God: God is the one authority over and above all else. I like Paul's words, they are clear and to the point, "One God... who is over all and through all and in all". He is the only authority for our mission. Without this authority we no ability to accomplish our mission.
- Out of this calling we see one Father: The Father is the one ultimate example of this love. He gave everything for those who had rejected Him. At some time during the Easter season this year, watch the Passion. When you understand what the father had to put His Son through to take care of the sin problem, you will have a small glimpse of the love of God for you and for a lost and dying world.

[7] But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

...[11] And He gave some *as* apostles, and some *as* prophets, and some *as* evangelists, and some *as* pastors and teachers, [12] for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; [13] until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

God is our Mission - Eph 4:11-13

- The mission of a pastor or leader - To prepare God's people for works of service (**Mission**) This is the assignment given to leaders. This is what a leader or pastor is to do.
- The mission of a member - To build up the Body of the Church. (**Mission**) This is the assignment given to members.

Eph 4:12-13 shows us 6 ways to build up the Body of the church. These show both the **mission** and the **goals** of the church as set by Christ and defined in greater detail by Paul.

1. Leaders are to equip members
2. Members are to build up the Body of Christ
3. We are all to reach the unity of the faith
4. In the knowledge of the Son of God
5. Become mature
6. Attain to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ (That full measure is expressed in one word - LOVE.)

(Part II next week.)

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CWS-NT - Complete Word Study of the New Testament.

CWS-OT - Complete Word Study of the Old Testament.

- Both the **CWS-NT** and the **CWS-OT** are parts of the AMG Complete Word Study Dictionary - Based on the lexicon of Edward Robinson (as revised by Alexander Negris and John Duncan), with constant reference to and citations from the works of John Parkhurst and Hermann Cremer.

(**dgb** Comments in parenthesis are personal comments that I make concerning quotes or information from other sources.)