Series: Life on Mission

Message: 03 Real Life Faith Mark 5:1-20

Text: Mark 5:1-20

Theme: Outreach

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Location: Christ Community EFC

This morning we are in week three of our sermon series, Life on Mission, and we will be looking at Real Life Faith.

How do we live life on mission in real life?

**If you would, please turn in your Bible to Mark 5, p. 840.**

We began our sermon series by painting a big picture. We painted a big picture of our big God.

We saw that a life on mission is a life that is centered on God, a life that seeks to worship and glorify God in everything we do.

We also saw that God has a plan to reach the lost and that plan includes you and me.

In His divine plan, God has placed you right where you are so He can use you to reach those people He has put around you.

Life on mission is about intersecting the gospel intentionally into our everyday routines.

In the second message of this series we were Building Gospel Foundations for a life on mission.

First we saw that: **The Gospel message itself must be foundational.**

The Gospel is the announcement of good news that transforms a life!

It is the starting point, the sustaining point and the finishing point to living a life on mission.

An everyday missionary who is not grounded in the gospel message is no missionary at all because he or she does not have good news to proclaim.

We also saw that accepting the gospel message and putting our faith in Christ is not the end of the story, it is the beginning.

We must grow and mature in our faith. **Spiritual maturity is essential** to living life on mission.

One truth from Hebrews 5 is that although there should be a correlation between the amount of time a person has known Jesus and their spiritual maturity, it doesn’t always work that way.

There are many believers whose spiritual maturity falls way behind their spiritual age.

Let me ask, know, grow, show—how are you doing? In what ways have you come to know God in a deeper way over the last year?

How is the Holy Spirit growing Christlike character in you? What is He working on you today?

Who is God using you right now to show His love to? Who does He want you to come along side of and show—disciple?

Ok. Spiritual maturity is essential to living life on mission.

And life on missions means that: **biblical community is necessary.**

Everyday missionaries need one another to carry out the mission of God.

Biblical community creates a picture. As we work together in community we show others a clear portrait of God as their Father.

God never intended us to live out the Christian life alone. Together as believers we operate as a picture of gospel transformation to the world.

Finally we saw that we must be: **committed to intentional discipleship**

Everyday missionaries are committed to making disciples that make disciples.

Our role as everyday missionaries is to introduce people to Christ, actively be a part of their journey to become like Christ and to teach them to do the same with others.

Jesus promised in Matthew 16:18 that He would build His church: “…**I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it**.

But in Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gave us the great commission to: “**Go … and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.**”

We are to make disciples who multiply: disciples who make disciples.

This morning we are going to consider that life on mission takes **Real Life Faith!**

How do we do this life on mission in my everyday life?

Everyday missionaries don’t just sit around reflecting on the gospel in a quiet room all day.

Everyday missionaries live with an urgency to live out their faith in real life.

They know it is not enough to have a biblical foundation—knowledge.

Everyday missionaries put into action, through strong mission practices, effort to show that they care and love others the way Christ cares for and loves them.

People who live on mission are always on the move toward others. They are motivated by the gospel.

The life of Jesus, as well as the ministry of Paul are good examples of this.

They didn’t wait for the world to come to them. And like them, we must seek and find people who have needs.

This is the heart behind and our prayer for the Serve weekend coming up in August.

Mark 5:1-20 “**They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.**

**2 And when Jesus had stepped out of the boat, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.**

**3 He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to subdue him.**

**5 Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out and cutting himself with stones. 6 And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and fell down before him.**

**7 And crying out with a loud voice, he said, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me.” 8 For he was saying to him, “Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!”**

**9 And Jesus asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “My name is Legion, for we are many.” 10 And he begged him earnestly not to send them out of the country.**

**11 Now a great herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside, 12 and they begged him, saying, “Send us to the pigs; let us enter them.”**

**13 So he gave them permission. And the unclean spirits came out and entered the pigs; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea and drowned in the sea.**

**14 The herdsmen fled and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened.**

**15 And they came to Jesus and saw the demon-possessed man, the one who had had the legion, sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid.**

**16 And those who had seen it described to them what had happened to the demon-possessed man and to the pigs. 17 And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their region.**

**18 As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him.**

**19 And he did not permit him but said to him, “Go home to your friends and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you.” 20 And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.**”

Jesus intentionally went to this man who was an outcast from his community. He had compassion on a man that society had written off and ultimately transformed his life.

Living our lives on mission requires us to be willing to follow Jesus’ example and go to the “other side.”

Typically the people who need our help are not just going to show up on our doorstep.

Although my neighbor, whom I have been praying for showed up at my door yesterday morning and asked if I would give him a jump.

Still, for the most part, people who need our help are not just going to show up on our doorstep.

We have to open our eyes and hearts to identify where they are and start moving toward them.

We have to invest in the lives of others as we intentionally join God where He is at work.

As we must go beyond inviting people into a relationship with Christ.

We must invite them into a discipleship relationships.

A relationship that will help them to grow and mature in their relationship with Christ and will ultimately lead them to go and make disciples as well.

Start where you are by getting to:

**Know Your Neighbor**

Let’s face it, by nature, we are all self-absorbed.

It’s easy to become consumed with ourselves and our families, thinking only about how situations will affect us and choosing friends and pursuing relationships based on what they can offer us.

What if we began to look at people differently? What if we joined God where He is already at work in the lives of friends, neighbors and work co-workers?

Everyday missionaries understand the need to identify people who need the gospel.

As followers of Jesus, it is our job to identify the people in our sphere of influence and share the gospel with them.

We begin by “knowing” our neighbors, our coworkers, team mates—their names, their stories, their backgrounds and their spiritual beliefs.

Knowing our neighbors is important when it comes to sharing the gospel. Understanding their cultural context allows us to establish common ground so the gospel message will be clear.

Though the gospel has to be foundational in the way we connect with those around us, if we don’t think about how we communicate, we run the risk of people not hearing the message.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 9:22, “**To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some**.”

This verse doesn’t mean that the apostle Paul became a cultural chameleon, just blending in to his surroundings.

It means he found ways to communicate the central truth of the gospel in different ways to different audiences.

Identifying who God is leading you to may be as simple as taking a walk with your eyes open. What are the glaring needs of those around you?

Their needs may be physical or relational, loneliness, sadness, grief, addictions, abuse, and more.

Also, a central part of identifying people and their needs is through prayer.

If you want to know whom God is specifically calling you to love and care for, ask Him!

Of course, it may involve more than just going next door. God could lead you to a place farther from home, physically or culturally, or even way outside of your comfort zone.

No matter where He leads, it all begins with prayer and opening your eyes and heart.

And having an attitude that says: Hear am I Lord—use me.

Know Your Neighbor and we need to be:

**Living an Intentional Life**

After identifying where God is at work around you, the next step is to take action and invest your life with those whom God has lead you.

Paul made this part of the process clear when he wrote to the church at Thessalonica.

In 1 Thessalonians 2:8, “**So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us**.”

Yes, we must declare the gospel, but we must also invest our lives—time, resources and gifts.

The gospel tells us that Jesus sacrificed everything for us. Jesus not only modeled sacrifice through His death, but also through His life.

Over and over throughout the Gospels, Jesus consistently poured His life into the people closest to Him.

He sacrificially served all those whom His life intersected.

Being on mission is not always about going to a specific place—its about being intentional right where you are.

It’s a lifestyle choice. It’s rooted in the knowledge that God is already on mission around you and has placed you in your environment because He wants to use you to reach the people around you.

It is powerful when we share the gospel with people with whom we also share our lives.

The act of investing in relationships to spread the gospel is called relational evangelism.

The reason it works so well is because we are more likely to listen to and trust something a friend tells us than something a complete stranger communicates to us.

Seriously investing in the lives of others takes a lot of time and energy. But, the Great Commission calls us to not simply make converts but also disciples.

So, as we invest in people’s lives and lead them to a relationship with Jesus Christ, we also invite them into a disciple-making relationship.

A relationship where we live life on life, investing time, reading the Bible together, holding each other accountable, as we walk the journey together.

Investing our lives this way isn’t easy and we may not see a return on our investment immediately.

Give it time. Be patient. And, remember: We are moved toward compassion because we have been shown much compassion.

Pray and allow God to work in His timing.

Ultimately our mission is to display the gospel while offering the opportunity to be saved by Jesus, but God is the only one who can transform a heart.

Know Your Neighbor

Living an Intentional Life

**It’s All About the Invite!**

It’s great to get to know our neighbors, help them when and where we can, but we must get to the invite!

Jesus was all about the invite.

As we read the gospels we see that Jesus invited people to eat with Him, surrender to Him, give up their possessions, walk with Him, follow Him, be healed, rest and the list goes on and on.

Ultimately, Jesus invites us all to experience salvation.

Jesus said in Luke 19:10, “**For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.**”

God Himself is on a rescue mission and invites people into right relationship with Him.

Joining God in His mission requires that we become willing to extend the invitation to others.

As we invite people into disciple-making relationships, biblical community is formed and as we invite people into biblical community, disciples are made who will make disciples.

You see, we are:

**Part of a Movement**

The goal of our church is not just to have an awesome church—which it is.

It’s not to keep the same people around us forever because we like doing life with them and ministering to them—and I do.

It’s not to selfishly keep what we have.

The goal is to see a movement! To see the gospel spread, new people come to know God, grow like Jesus, and learn to show others how to do the same.

The goal is to make disciples who show others how to make disciples who make disciples.

We want to see more people reached, more small groups launched in order to enfold the lost into biblical community—the church.

In August, we will be uniting with Savannah United Methodist, Bethel Baptist, and Trinity Baptist to serve our community.

We are praying that through these acts of service we will build some relationships that will give us opportunities to share the gospel and invite these folks into a discipleship relationship.

At the end of the day it’s not about getting more people in our church building—it’s about making disciples regardless of which church building they end up.

To impact the Kingdom of God, everyday missionaries must become part of equipping and developing others to live on mission, helping them to know God, grow in Christlikeness, and to show other people as they mature in faith and ministry.

**Conclusion**

Our role as everyday missionaries is to introduce people to Christ and to disciple them, and to actively be a part of their journey to become like Christ and to teach them to do the same with others.

As a church body, learning to identify, invest and invite friends, family, coworkers, and neighbors in the family of Christ begins today.

Making disciples won’t happen overnight and it will require prayer and patience as God begins to work in individuals.

Regardless of specifics, being intentional about living and sharing our faith is foundational when it comes to building the Kingdom.

Look at where God has put you to discover who He wants you to reach and disciple.

It’s about raising up others and then sending them out to do what you have done for them.

It is His mission. It is His work and God, Himself, extends to us the great invitation of being a part of it all.

**Benediction “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.” (Num. 6:24-26)**