



THE MISSION STARTS HERE

A personal connection evangelism strategy for
Alabama Baptist Campus Ministries and church
collegiate groups for every campus

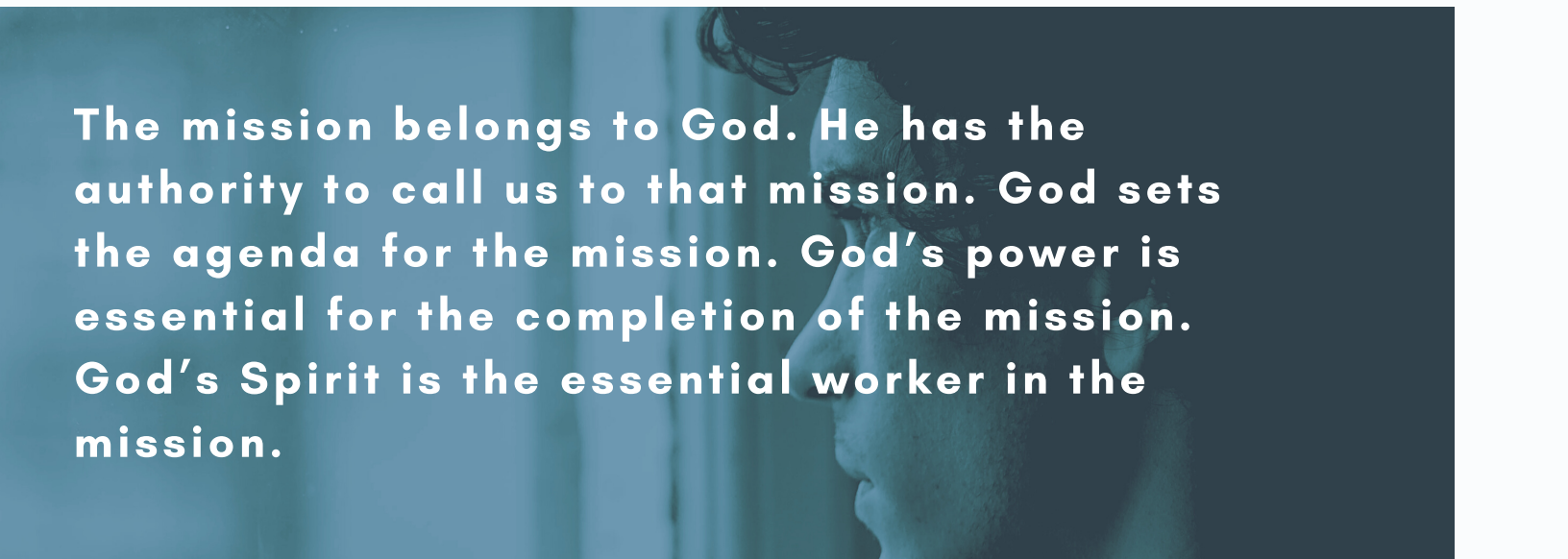
The Mission Belongs to God

Many times when we are confronted with the mission of God for His disciples we begin with a self-centered approach to pursuing that mission. We immediately begin to look for what WE can do and what actions WE need to take. We often miss a crucial focus in pursuing the mission of God- the mission is ALL ABOUT GOD! The mission belongs to God. He has the authority to call us to that mission. God sets the agenda for the mission. God's power is essential for the completion of the mission. God's Spirit is the essential worker in the mission.

All fruitfulness in the mission comes from God. Yet, we often make the mission all about us.

How do we break out of this self-dependence? We simply turn our dependence to God in prayer and in our reliance on the Holy Spirit. Evangelistic prayer is essentially prayer that depends upon God to act and work in the lives of those around you. Evangelistic prayer depends upon God to provide for needs and soften hearts. Jesus models this sort of prayer in the gospel accounts of the "Lord's Prayer".

Many times we proceed into the evangelistic task by depending upon our own knowledge, communication skills, specialized evangelistic training and relational gifts. All of those things are wonderful gifts and skills to develop and have God use- but they are terrible things to depend upon for fruitfulness. Skills, gifts and human effort will fail. We will often not have the words to say, be unclear in our words or be awkward in our relationships, or forget all of our training. We must recognize that depending upon God's Spirit to do the Work that belongs to Him is the way to fruitfulness. God's Word repeatedly points us to the Spirit's work in evangelism and making disciples. Let's not make the mistake of trusting in human effort over the Holy Spirit's power.



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Praying in Dependence on God

SCRIPTURE TEXT

Matthew 6:9-13

BIG IDEA

Boldly depending on God in prayer is essential in experiencing evangelistic and discipling fruitfulness.

- Have you ever had the opportunity to share the gospel with someone but you felt ill prepared?
- Have you ever felt like you didn't have the words to speak when the door was opened for you to have a spiritual conversation with someone?
- Does it seem like you never have the opportunity to share with non-believers?
- What do you do consistently to prepare for gospel sharing opportunities?

GETTING IN THE WORD

Read Matthew 6:9-13

This text is often called the Model Prayer or the Lord's Prayer. Jesus is teaching his followers how to pray. He literally says "Pray like this." That's pretty straightforward and clear and the disciple would do well to follow his teaching.

We often study prayer as a topic to understand how it should be a part of our daily lives and how it benefits the believer. Prayer certainly has its benefits for the believer. Through prayer we communicate and commune with God. We lay our burdens, needs and desires before Him. We listen for Him, His provision, His guidance and His correction. But prayer isn't just about us and our needs. For the discipling maker we must be praying for others and praying towards the mission. The mission of the discipling maker is to "make disciples who make disciples" (Matt. 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, 2 Tim. 2:2). We must actively pursue that mission in prayer.

What does that look like in our lives? Jesus models it for us right here in Matthew 6.



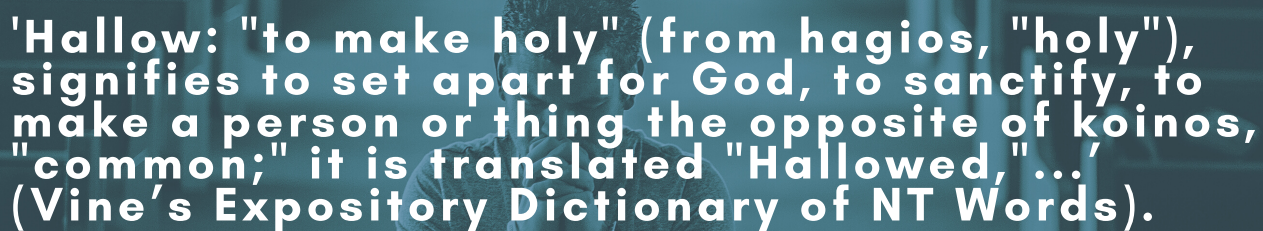
Boldly depending on God in prayer is essential in experiencing evangelistic and discipling fruitfulness.

I. "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." (Matthew 6:9, ESV)

Jesus begins at the beginning- with God. He is the beginning and end. He is over everything. Everything is about him. We exist for his glory. We are on mission for his glory. We are saved and evangelize for his glory. It's all about HIM!

He also acknowledges that God is in Heaven. God sits on His throne and is the ruling power over everything. He rules and reigns in His kingdom from heaven. Jesus reminds us that God (the creator and ruler of all) is not some idol or god who is able to be manipulated or formed to the desires of humanity. This is God the Father, creator God and ruler God. He doesn't exist for us, we exist for Him!

Jesus also ascribes holiness ("hallowed be your name") to God. Holy means "set apart".




'Hallow: "to make holy" (from hagios, "holy"), signifies to set apart for God, to sanctify, to make a person or thing the opposite of koinos, "common;" it is translated "Hallowed, "...'
(Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words).

God is not us and we are certainly not God. He is not common. He is not a little, powerless god made by the hands of men. God is "set apart" from us in His existence, purity, perfection, and power. We are reminded of who God is and who we are not by Jesus in this model prayer. God is creator, sustainer and ruler of all- He alone has that power and rule. God should be revered by us in our prayers- respected and honored.

Jesus models prayer that recognizes that God alone has the rule and power. He alone is hallowed, holy and set-apart. Jesus paints a picture of God as wholly sufficient and we are wholly insufficient. God is completely independent (He doesn't depend on us) and we are completely dependent on Him. And this is where Jesus starts- with God who is over all.

Why do you think this is where Jesus starts? Jesus reminds us that prayer should be God centered. We should never come to prayer with our hearts centered on ourselves and our wants and needs. We should always come to God with Him at the center of our prayers as creator, sustainer and ruler. Why do you feel this approach is important for the disciplinemaker?

If we are bringing our mission-targeted and other-targeted prayers to God it is important that we recognize Him as creator, sustainer and ruler because the creator, sustainer and ruler is the one who will give fruit, yield and increase. If you have opportunities to speak the gospel, those opportunities come from God's hand.



If we have the words to speak when we are given opportunities to share the Gospel, those words come from God. If people are open to the Gospel it is because God worked in their hearts. If they respond to the Gospel in faith it is because God worked in their lives through the Holy Spirit bringing conviction, pointing to Jesus and giving faith. God is the initiator in any saving work in anyone's life. The salvation and continuing growth of the disciple is dependent fully upon the work of God!

"3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." - 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, ESV:

Therefore, the disciplemaker must come to God depending upon Him and relying completely on His initiative and work. We pray that He will open the spiritual eyes of the lost. We cannot open their eyes. God can. That is dependent prayer.

II. "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10, ESV)

Many times our prayers look like a Christmas list for Santa. Some people who carry the name "Christian" will even paint a picture of God that says that if you ask for what YOU want with enough faith, God will give it to YOU.

We often fall into this trap when we pray prayers that place us at the center instead of God. We do this when we pray prayers that further our personal agenda instead of God's mission and when we tell God how things are going to be instead of receiving and deferring to Him. Jesus reminds us of the proper posture of prayer (dependence) and the desired outcome of prayer (His Kingdom) and the source of this outcome (His rule in heaven). The disciplemaker approaches God depending upon God to carry out His agenda and not ours.

- **How do we seek our own agenda in our prayers?**
- **How do prayers that seek God's agenda look?**

The disciplemaker comes to God totally dependent on His working in the lives of others. We ask Him to work in the lives of others. We ask Him to draw them to Himself. We ask God to open doors. We ask God to give us the words to speak. We ask God to give us boldness. The disciplemaker is in complete dependence on God and His work.

God is the one who saves, not us. God is the one who delivers us from the domain of darkness to Christ's kingdom. That is His work, not ours.

"He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."- Colossians 1:13-14, ESV

This means that we leave our personal agenda out of the conversation. We don't come to God asking Him to give our plans His approval. We come seeking His plan and move in obedience to Him. We don't come telling God how great our plans and dreams are. We come realizing our plans and dreams are insufficient and we seek His sufficient plan. We don't come to God so locked into our plans and opinions that we rigidly oppose what God wants to do in and through us.

- **How have you prayed with your personal agenda front and center?**
- **How can you keep yourself from praying that way?**
- **How do you keep God's agenda in the forefront?**

Keeping the Gospel at the front and center of our lives will keep us focused on God's agenda. The gospel of Jesus Christ is God's redemptive plan- it is God's "agenda". Immersing yourself in the Gospel, preaching it to yourself and others, learning it, studying it and worshipping through it will keep us focused on God's agenda.



We don't come to God asking Him to give our plans His approval. We come seeking His plan and move in obedience to Him.

III. "Give us this day our daily bread..." (Matthew 6:11, ESV)

A dependant disciplemaker sits before God in a receiving posture. We come before God with empty hands open to receiving our daily needs from Him. The same posture is applicable to our disciple making efforts and what we desire to see Him provide. We come before God receiving the work He will do instead of coming to Him informing Him of all that we are doing for Him.

This posture of receiving also helps us rest from worry and self-reliance. God's got this! We are, simply, to be obedient in sharing and proclaiming the Gospel. We can then rest and allow God to work. We can offer encouragement and clarify the Gospel- then we can rest and let God work. God's Spirit brings the fruit. God's Spirit works to bring about the harvest. That is not the job of the disciplemaker.

We should be able to rest in God's provision like the farmer in Mark 4:


"And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. 27 He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how. 28 The earth produces by itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come." - Mark 4:26-29, ESV

The farmer plants (proclaims/deposits the Gospel) and receives/brings in the harvest. But the harvest is given by God. We have work to do in planting and watering but we must simply rest in God giving the harvest. Paul says it this way in 1 Corinthians 3:7, ESV: "So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."

- **What can you pray that will show more dependence on God's work and God's gifts?**
- **What prayer do you need to pray for your lost friends right now that recognizes God as the giver of the harvest?**

IV. "...and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." (Matthew 6:12-13, ESV)

Even as we share with others as disciplemakers we must remember our status as sinners saved by grace. We never forget our history as we share the hope of the gospel of Jesus Christ with others.



Our prayers as a disciplemaker should remember our past sinful state and our current struggles with the sinful nature. Our prayers should consistently be confessional- expressing our sinfulness to God, acknowledging His forgiveness and resting in the peace we now have with God. Confessional prayers are less about preparing the lost for our evangelistic efforts and more about preparing our hearts and lives for the Lord's work as disciplemakers. We must be ever vigilant to maintain a healthy fellowship with God. Abide in Him and allow Him to use us and work in and through us.

This prayer is two fold. Jesus shows that disciples should confess our sin and rest in God's forgiveness. He then shows that the disciple should seek God's guidance and deliverance from unholy living. The disciple is dependent on God for forgiveness and for walking in holiness.

- **What hidden sins can you share that are a hindrance to you being used by God?**
- **How does recognizing your forgiveness and salvation change your prayers? Do you pray differently for your lost friends when you recognize that?**

REVIEW

See if you can recall the marks of dependent prayer:

- Begins with God on His throne
- Recognizes God's rule, reign and holiness
- Recognizes that all fruit and harvest comes from God's hand
- Seeks God's agenda
- Rejects our personal agendas and receives from God as He works
- Rests from our own efforts & trusts that because God will give the increase
- Confession & recognizing God's forgiveness prepares the heart of the disciplemaker



Confessional prayers are less about preparing the lost for our evangelistic efforts and more about preparing our hearts and lives for the Lord's work as disciplemakers..



THE MISSION STARTS HERE: PRAYING FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS & CAMPUSES

"Our Father who is in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen." -Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB)

OUR FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN

- Acknowledge God as ruler and authority
- Recognize God's sovereign rule over the campuses in your sphere of influence
- Surrender to God's agenda for us as we reach this campus with the Gospel of Christ

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

- Acknowledge the holiness and majesty of God
- Recognize his holiness and our sinfulness as humanity
- Ask God to make His holiness, human sinfulness and human guilt clear to those on our campus
- Humble ourselves to Him for he alone is worthy of honor and praise

YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

- Ask God to move mightily for His glory on our campuses
- Ask God to act according to His will on our campuses
- Ask God's Spirit to make Jesus known to students on our campuses
- Surrender our work to God's desires

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

- Ask God to empower us to be about his work
- Repent of our continued dependence upon our own resources
- Ask God to provide the Spirit's power for churches & campus ministries who desire to reach collegians.
- Ask God to provide the strength needed to stay the course

AND FORGIVE US OUR DEBTS

- Lay our sinful attitudes and actions before God in repentance
- Recognize our forgiveness in Christ and our identity in Him
- Ask God to help us live Gospel-centered lives on campus and in the community- extending grace and forgiveness to a lost world
- Ask God to use us as bold proclaimers of the hope in Jesus

AND DO NOT LEAD US INTO TEMPTATION

- Ask God to empower Christian students for holy living
- Ask God to convict His children of the sinful attitudes and actions that are hindering their witness
- Ask for God to bring His children through times of temptation for His glory and as a witness to Himself
- Ask God to draw sinners to Him and the deliverance He offers in Jesus

FOR YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER

- Recognize that all ministry fruit depends upon the power of God and on Him alone
- Ask God to move in power and not by our will and might
- Ask God to use Christian college students and workers on campus for His glory and honor

Holy Spirit Dependence

Where do you find yourself in terms of following Christ's command to make disciples?

What do your everyday interactions with the world look like?

Would you say that you live your life with purpose and mission?

Do you believe that you have a task or assignment in this world?

Do you feel that you are living up to that assignment?

It is certain that just recently someone at your church or at BCM has laid out before you the task of the disciple, or talked to you about the mission of the disciple, or offered opportunities to live out that task or mission.

Disciple, what do you do? Seriously, what do you really DO with your faith in Christ?


THE DILEMMA

Here we find a dilemma. The disciple of Jesus Christ has been given a task, an assignment. Look at Matthew 28:18-20, ESV:

"And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Yet, the disciple (let's be honest) rarely does what he/she has been assigned to do. We have a King over our life, a Lord who sits enthroned over all creation, who sits over our lives, who rules and reigns, who gives directives for our lives.

And we simply shrug our shoulders and speak nothing. We mouth pious excuses about confrontation, and rejection, and lack of knowledge, and uncomfortableness, and culture and



and personal limitations. Then we simply shrug our shoulders and speak nothing. We get training, and go to seminars, and grow as a believer, and hear the Gospel, and study the Gospel, and worship God and sing the Gospel, and listen to missionaries and go and serve others, and love people. And we simply shrug our shoulders again and speak nothing.

The King looks us in the eyes and gives us a command, a task to accomplish, an assignment. And we just do nothing. We are generally silent. You are generally silent. Most believers are generally silent about Jesus.

The silent believer finds himself/herself fully equipped to voice the gospel of Jesus Christ. They know Jesus. They know and understand the gospel. They understand basic strategies for speaking about Jesus and inviting others to respond to Him. They have been trained in dealing with objections to Christianity. Yet they remain silent.

They stay mired in inactivity and never take action. They sit in silence and never speak. They stay where they are and never go. Why do multitudes of believers, most believers, remain silent about the King?

Something is missing in our postmodern Christian existence and it hasn't always been this way. The early Church lived differently and the Church exploded, and the Gospel went out and it crossed continents and oceans and has made it into the farthest corners of the world. It made it here to you, didn't it?

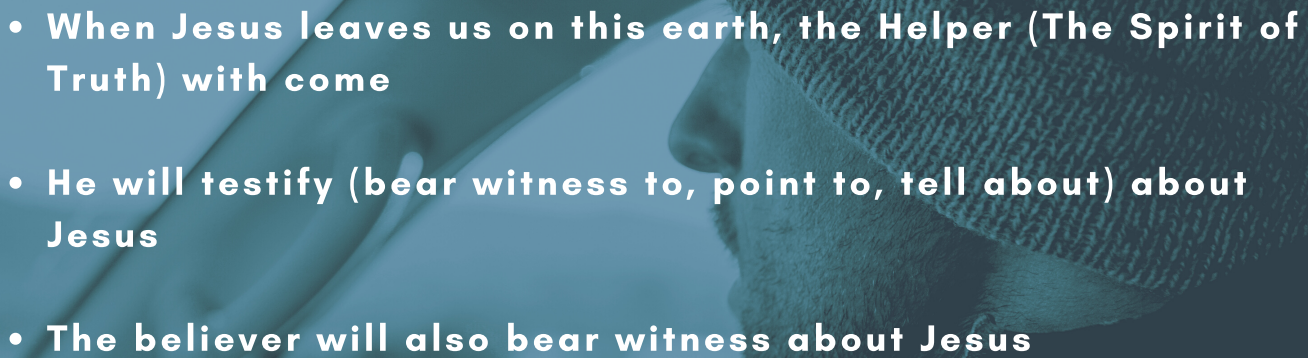
So what is missing?

THE MISSING PERSON

Someone is missing and a quick glance at God's Word shows us who that is. In fact, Jesus reminded His followers not to forget this Person, to remember Him and His work because it would affect their completion of the assignment that He was giving them.

A. The Holy Spirit's job is to testify to Jesus Christ and through His power the believer will not be silent- John 15:26-27, ESV

26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. 27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning."

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- **When Jesus leaves us on this earth, the Helper (The Spirit of Truth) will come**
 - **He will testify (bear witness to, point to, tell about) about Jesus**
 - **The believer will also bear witness about Jesus**

Jesus has made it clear- the Spirit is with the believer, the Spirit points to Jesus and we will also be able to point to Jesus. The believer's witness to Christ is fully dependent on the work of the Spirit. People will see Jesus and who he is because the Spirit of God has worked in their lives.

A word of caution: We have missed this important truth. Jesus specifically taught his followers that he was going to leave them and the Spirit would come to them. He reminded them of just what the Spirit does and what we are to do. Yet we miss this.

In our lives we are looking for an answer to our silence and Jesus was clearly speaking this truth to us as He headed to the cross. Yet we miss it. We miss Him. We miss the Spirit. Why do we do that? Possibly, we do that because we think about the Spirit of God in two limited realms in our lives- worship and holy living.

This generation loves to worship and that's a good thing. But when we limit the Spirit's activity and influence to a time of worship we miss what the Spirit is really about. We imprison the Holy Spirit behind the walls of worship. We fail to recognize and live with him outside of those walls. We talk of His influence and presence in worship- he becomes a missing person outside of those walls. We worship the King as being of unsurpassing worth and power, yet we live as if God is powerless in our world outside those walls.

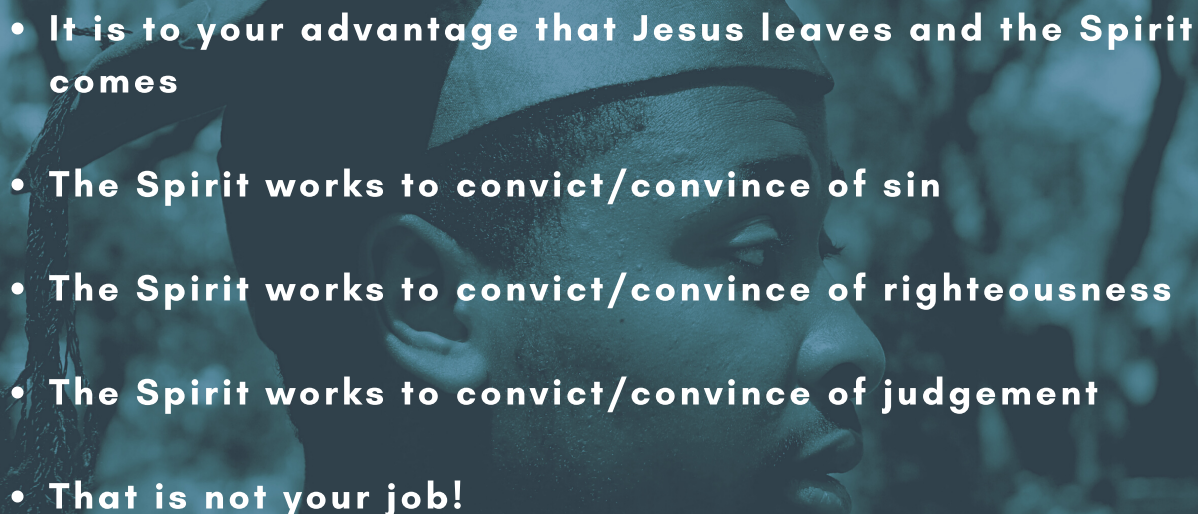
We talk often of the Spirit empowering us for holy living, to help us resist temptation, defeat the flesh and live holy lives. But, unfortunately, we leave His influence there. We know and experience His ability to empower us for holy living privately, but live as if the Spirit is powerless in the public world.

Remember the Spirit's role in evangelism. The Spirit points to Jesus and we will also be able to point to Jesus. The believer's witness to Christ is fully dependent on the work of the Spirit. People will see Jesus and who he is because the Spirit of God has worked in their lives. Act in obedience and dependence on the Spirit of God to proclaim the gospel boldly.

Takeaway: The Holy Spirit's job is to testify to Jesus Christ and through His power we will not be silent.

B. Conviction is the Work of the Spirit, Not the Work of the Believer- John 16:7-8, ESV

"7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. 8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment"

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- **It is to your advantage that Jesus leaves and the Spirit comes**
 - **The Spirit works to convict/convince of sin**
 - **The Spirit works to convict/convince of righteousness**
 - **The Spirit works to convict/convince of judgement**
 - **That is not your job!**

One of our first excuses for remaining silent is that we are afraid we don't know enough, or can't answer the questions of our friends, or will say the wrong thing. Here is the truth: You are not enough. You don't know enough. You don't have all the answers. But God's Spirit does. That is His job! Don't let that discourage you, let that drive you to dependence on the Holy Spirit.

Takeaway: Let the Spirit do His job of convicting and convincing. Your job is to be dependent on the Spirit and to let Him do His divine work.

C. Witness Timing and Location is Determined by the Spirit- Acts 1:4-5, 8, ESV

"4 And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, "you heard from me; 5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." "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."

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- **Wait- only witness under the influence of God's Spirit**
 - **The believer has God's Spirit indwelling Him/Her**

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- **The indwelling Spirit gives power to witness when the Spirit comes**
 - **Go- under the influence of the Spirit to the ends of the earth.**

Many of you have had frustrating experiences with trying to talk about Jesus with your friends or family. You are afraid that will happen again. I've been there. I've been a terrible witness to Jesus, I've missed opportunities. And every time I have done that I was depending on my strategy, my knowledge, my direction and my power. I had ignored the Spirit.

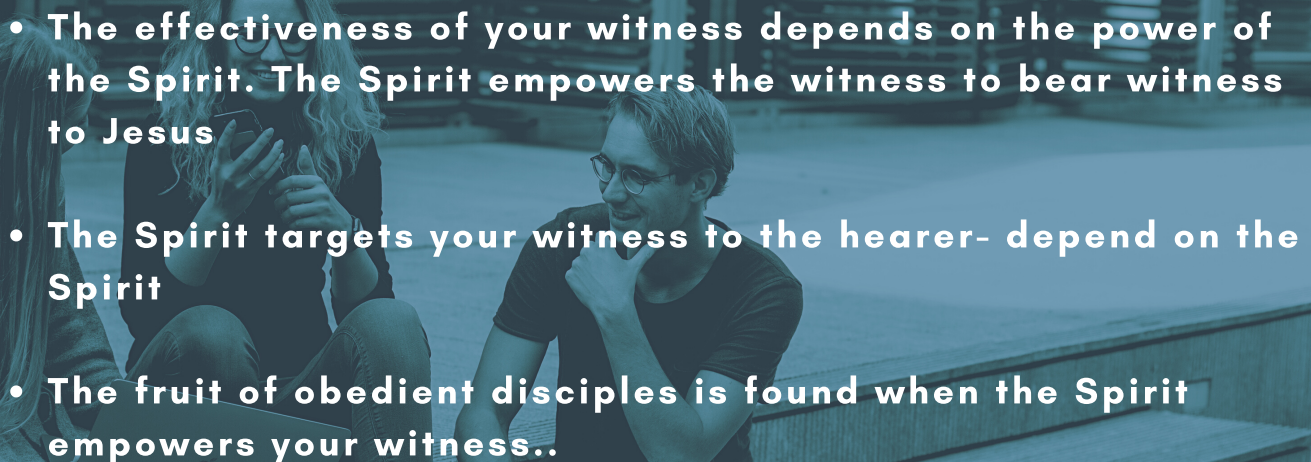
- Before you step into the world, turn your dependence onto the Spirit of God. Seek His presence in worship, seek His transformation in holy living, seek His empowerment for mission.
- Acknowledge that you are powerless.
- Recognize the Spirit's power and work.
- Without reservation, without any trace of self-reliance- cast yourself upon the Spirit's power.
- Obey and Speak!

Takeaway: Do not move without God's Spirit influencing you. Turn your dependence to Him to accomplish the mission you've been given.

D. The Witness Finds Their Effectiveness in the Influence of the Spirit- Acts 2: 11, 41 ESV

"11b we hear them telling ... the mighty works of God."

"41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls."

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- **The effectiveness of your witness depends on the power of the Spirit. The Spirit empowers the witness to bear witness to Jesus**
 - **The Spirit targets your witness to the hearer- depend on the Spirit**
 - **The fruit of obedient disciples is found when the Spirit empowers your witness..**

There is only one place to experience fruitfulness in your witness- in dependence on the Spirit to witness through you. God can and does use your knowledge, your training, your strategies concerning the Gospel of Christ. God desires your obedience to speak and proclaim th gospel. But fruitfulness is always a work of the Spirit of God.

Takeaway: The fruitful witness depends on the power of the Spirit and is guided by the Spirit.

SPIRIT-EMPOWERED WITNESS

What does this Spirit-empowered witness look like?

Here's how the Spirit-empowered witness acts and proceeds: They develop the habit of abiding in Christ and listening to the Spirit through prayer, worship and the Word of God. They first seek to find the Spirit working before they move. They ask the Spirit to do His work instead of depending on their own words, skills, or wisdom- everything they hope to see happen is the work of the Spirit. The witness admits their dependence and fruitlessness before God. They humbly ask God to use them and speak through them. If the Spirit says move (from here to there) they move- immediately and without reservation. Finally, they ask God to make Jesus known through them and in spite of their human limitations. Remember, all fruitful witness comes from God- live that, trust that, walk in that. Your only job is to obey the King by speaking.

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- **Admit powerlessness.**
 - **Depend on the Holy Spirit- for direction, location, words and fruitfulness.**
 - **Speak boldly and obediently**

WHAT NOW?

Now is the time to build on the disciplemaking foundations that have been placed in your lives. Move boldly in dependence on God's Spirit through prayerful humility and faith before God.

One way to move forward in your disciplemaking mission is to couple an action plan to your foundational dependence upon God's working power. One action plan has been developed in conjunction with this document called Prayer, Care, Share. This action plan provides a simple guide for how you can take small steps to interact with and connect with people God has placed in your circle of influence.

Take a look at this action plan and make it a part of your daily disciplemaking strategy. Pull together some other Christian partners to hold one another accountable in depending upon God and taking these actions steps daily.

Live with the King's missions mandate in your heart and mind everyday. The mission is ALL ABOUT GOD! The mission belongs to God. He has the authority to call us to that mission. God sets the agenda for the mission. God's power is essential for the completion of the mission. God's Spirit is the essential worker in the mission. Move forward in obedience to that call to mission. The mission starts here.

"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."

- Acts 1:8, ESV