

Chapter 6

The Mission of God

What is our ultimate purpose as individuals and as a church? What is God's mission for us? From the beginning, God has desired to make Himself known and enjoyed. God's goal has always been to glorify God.

God

GLORY

The word "glory" conveys the idea of 'heaviness', 'weight' or 'worthiness'. It is used of men to describe their wealth, splendor or reputation. The glory of God denotes the revelation of God's being, nature and presence to mankind. It is the significance of who God is.

Notice God's concern for displaying his own image in the beginning of Creation.

Genesis 1:27 So God created man **in his own image**, in the image of God he created

A MEMBERSHIP CLASS FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

Mankind utterly failed in representing God's perfect image, thus God put a new plan into motion to display his image by sending His Son, Jesus.

Hebrews 1:3 He is the **radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature**, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins he sat down at the right hand of Majesty on high

Colossians 1:15 He is **the image** of the invisible God,

It is now through faith in Jesus that God is crafting His people back into His image.

2 Corinthians 3:18 ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed **into the same image** from one degree of **glory** to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

God's mission for God's church is, therefore, to represent God's glory to the world. (Rom. 15:5-7; Matt. 5:16; 1 Cor. 10:31; 1 Pt. 4:11; Eph. 3:10-11).

JOINING TOGETHER

There are many ways that we give glory to God, but there is one primary way that the church spreads the glory of God. Throughout the Bible, God receives the most glory through his mightiest acts of salvation.

God has worked his mightiest act of salvation in the person of Jesus and he has now commissioned his church to spread the news of that salvation to all people, everywhere.

Make _____

This is the great command to every follower of Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and said to them. 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, ²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

These are the last words to Jesus' disciples and they are the lasting words for God's church today. Our mission is to make more disciples by sharing the saving message and teachings of Jesus to others in a way that they will in turn lead others to follow Jesus in the same way.

DISCIPLE

A disciple is a follower of a person, a teaching and a way of life. The twelve disciples of Jesus followed him, learned from him, obeyed him and in turn taught others to do the same. The Bible, however, uses this word to describe all true followers of Jesus. The word “Christian” and “disciple” should be synonymous for us. There are no true Christians that are not truly disciples.

Jesus’ last words were, “go therefore and make disciples”, but this should come to no surprise considering Jesus’ first words to his followers.

Matthew 4:19 “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men”

Jesus was molding these men so that God might use them in His great purpose of offering salvation to the world. Unfortunately, many church attenders of our generation have believed the lie that this great commission to make disciples is limited for only certain followers of Jesus. The Bible, however, does not portray disciple-making as an optional task for believers. After all, if we are to be like Jesus then we must engage in the disciple making work that dominated his ministry. God grew his church in the book of Acts through a church that believed every disciple of Jesus was responsible for making disciples of Jesus (Acts 5:14; 6:7; 9:31; 11:21; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20).

JOINING TOGETHER

Consider Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonian church that was doing well in their disciple-making ministry.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-10 We give thanks to God always for all of you, **constantly mentioning you in our prayers,** ³ remembering before our God and Father your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁴ For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, ⁵ **because our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power** and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. **You know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.** ⁶ **And you became imitators of us** and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, ⁷ **so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.** ⁸ **For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything.** ⁹ For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

The Thessalonians received the Word and then sounded forth the Word! Here are some principles of disciple making that we can see in Paul's encouragement to the Thessalonians.

- **Disciple making requires continual**
_____ (v.2)
- **Disciple making requires powerful**
_____ (v.5)
- **Disciple making requires intentional**
_____ (v.6-7)
- **Disciple making results in more**
_____ (v.8)

This is the task, but where do we start and how far do we go with this mission?

Of _____

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."

God's plan is that we glorify God by making disciples here, there, and everywhere. Jesus commanded his disciples to start with Jerusalem, the region closest to them, and then to the further reaching and more difficult areas of Judea and Samaria and finally to the ends of the earth. The mission is for all peoples in all places.

JOINING TOGETHER

How many people live in your city that need the gospel of Jesus Christ?

How many people live in your parish or county that need the gospel of Jesus Christ?

How many people live in the world that need the gospel of Jesus Christ?

- It is estimated that 1.9 billion people of the world's 7.4 billion claim to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation from their sins.
- Approximately 2 billion people do not even have access to the saving message of Jesus.

Our mission as individuals and as a church is to make disciples of all peoples from our own families and neighbors to the unreached peoples at the ends of the Earth. This mission can be daunting. What motivation could possibly sustain us in our engagement of such a task?!

Eternity Demands Our _____

There is only one name and one message that can save people from an eternity in hell where they will rightly suffer the consequences of their sins against God, and we have the good news that can change their eternity.

There is Only One God Worthy of _____

We know the one true God and his goodness is beyond comparison or comprehension. May we proclaim his marvelous deeds to those who hopelessly worship false gods that offer no salvation.

We Find Peace in the Promise of His

Acts 1:8 promises that we will receive **power** when we are Christ's witnesses. We do not engage in this mission alone, but we are empowered by the very presence and work of the almighty God. We glorify God by making disciples of all nations knowing that it is God who accomplishes this mission through us.



WEEKLY CHALLENGE

The example church Covenant in the appendix reads,

"In all that we do we seek to accomplish the mission of glorifying God by making disciples of all nations.¹ We believe that every true disciple of Jesus is a disciple maker and we will actively seek ways that God might use us in this mission."

How are you going to actively seek ways for God to use you in his mission? Make a list of 3 people you know that need salvation. Commit to pray for them each day and begin to invest in those relationships so that you might invite them to the salvation Jesus offers and into a disciple-making relationship with you.

Conclusion

Next Steps?

These next steps are the next steps for members joining St. Rose Community Church. If you are utilizing this booklet at another church be sure to speak with your membership class teacher and get more information on next steps for joining that specific church. This booklet is merely a summary of the foundational beliefs and practices of our church. The church also has a statement of faith which includes more detailed beliefs on a wide variety of topics. Speak with your leader for more information on the church's statement of faith and make sure that you align with the church's beliefs. Now that you have been introduced to our church and to many of the core beliefs, there are some steps to finalize your membership.

- Schedule an appointment with one of the church pastors to sign the church covenant and the church will vote on your church membership at the next member meeting.
- Be prepared to answer the following questions at your final pastor interview.
 - When were you baptized?
 - How did you come to saving faith in Jesus Christ?
 - What is the Gospel message?

Where do I serve?

First and foremost, make disciples who make disciples, but there are also many service areas that we could use help with at our church. Ask your leader about those opportunities.